

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.—NO. 1131.—3 FEBRUARY, 1866.

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The Poetical Works of Henry Taylor, D.
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THE wealth of the present century in Poetry generally has often been contrasted with its comparative poverty in the Drama. In most Continental countries the serious drama has long fallen to a low ebb; and among ourselves the number of dramatic aspirants has been more remarkable than their success. There has, however, been one conspicuous exception. *Philip van Artevelde* at once achieved for its author a place in English literature. It appeared under the title of *A Dramatic Romance*: the public was not intimidated by the challenge of "Two Parts;" and repeated editions prove that it had in it that which holds its own. If the theme was a large one, the handling was large too; and a style of classical severity, no less than an abundance of such practical thought as is gleaned from the fields of experience, showed that the author had not grudged that conscientious labour which spares labour to the reader. Mr. Taylor has now republished this work, with four other plays, and his minor poems, in a revised and complete edition. Of these, *Isaak Commenus* and *Edwin the Fair* have been before the world long enough to take their place. We shall break new ground, confining our remarks to his two more recent dramas, and his minor poems. They are destined, unless we are mistaken, to as high a place as his earlier works occupy; but we shall be equally frank in our expressions of approval and disapproval. We shall conclude with some observations on the comparative merits and characters of our earlier and our later drama, and on the relation in which the author of *Philip van Artevelde* stands to both.

The two dramas are entitled *A Sicilian Summer*, and *St. Clement's Eve*.

A Sicilian Summer occupies a peculiar position, both in Mr. Taylor's poetry and in modern literature. Since the earlier part of the seventeenth century we have had but few comedies after the genuine Shakspearean model. Our modern comedies have been comedies of wit and manners:

they have dealt with the humours, not the heart of man, and aimed but to combine a skilful plot with a brilliant, superficial sketch of society. Such was the comedy of Sheridan, whose works are perhaps the happiest specimens of the style to which they belong. But the Shakspearean comedy was another order of composition. It differed from his tragedy in the absence of a sad catastrophe; but in spite of the gay scenes with which they are so delightfully varied, such plays as the *Merchant of Venice*, *The Tempest*, and *As You Like It*, are as full of serious purpose as Shakspeare's tragedies themselves. It is not with wit and manners, but with character and poetry, that they deal. Those trifles on the surface of society with which they sport so buoyantly do not hinder them from descending into the heart of the humanities. In them joy and sorrow are allowed to alternate their voices, as they do in the long dispute of human life, although the brighter genius has the last word. It is from the imagination and the reason that all genuine poetry springs, the imagination claiming in it that first place, which in philosophical inquiry she concedes to the more masculine power. The higher drama is thus competent to measure itself with the whole of human life. There is a music in human laughter as well as in sighs, of which reason alone can discern the law; and there is a depth in the humorous which the imagination alone can fathom. Ages before a Shakspeare had been raised up to prove the truth of the assertion, the great critic of antiquity had affirmed, that the intellect capable of the highest greatness in tragedy must be competent in comedy no less.

A Sicilian Summer is as bright and musical as the southern clime it illustrates, and it is full of that wisdom which is never wiser than in its sportive moods. It is not, however, every reader who will appreciate it. Strength touches all: but strength refined into grace addresses itself to a select circle. Tragic passion, be it remembered, challenges the personal as well as the imaginative sensibilities; and as such it affects not only a better class, but many likewise who, if they sometimes respond to

what is truly great, yet as frequently burst into raptures at the clumsiest appeals. It is far otherwise with those passages of a finer grain—those delicate hair-strokes of felicitous thought and finished expression, which to be apprehended at all must be fully appreciated. By many poetry is liked best for the accidents with which the noblest poetry is most willing to dispense. In its inmost essence it reveals itself but to those who prefer the distant flute-tone to the rattle of wire and wood, and enjoy most the odour that floats upon the breeze.

The scene of *A Sicilian Summer* is chiefly at Palermo, where Silisco, Marquis of Malespina, in the prodigality of youthful spirits and vast wealth, fills his old palace with a perpetual revel. His generosity and his magnificence make him the delight of the young; but the old prognosticate his speedy ruin,—a catastrophe not the less probable because the young nobleman, after the fashion of the time, is merchant too. He charts a ship to Rhodes, mortgaging the remaining portions of his estates to three Jews. Spadone, the captain of the ship, conspires to betray at once his employer and his crew. He is to sink his vessel on his return, and escaping in a boat with his fellow-conspirators, to secrete amid the catacombs, near the sea shore, the jewels and ingots of gold which he has brought from Rhodes. In the meantime Rosalba, daughter of the king's chamberlain, Count Ubaldo, comes from Procida to Palermo, accompanied by her chosen friend Fiordeliza. The revels at Silisco's palace are soon given exclusively on her account, Fiordeliza being wooed at the same time by Ruggiero, the friend of Silisco, though the severest censor of his waste. Count Ubaldo has, however, contracted Rosalba to Ugo, Count of Arezzo, the wealthiest of the Sicilian nobles, desiring to preserve her from spendthrifts and fortune-hunters, and seeing nothing amiss in a bridegroom of between sixty and seventy years. At the king's entreaty Ubaldo relents so far as to say that he will not insist on his daughter's engagement if Count Ugo can be induced to forego it, and if Silisco is able, on the return of his ship, to redeem his lands of Malespina, impledged to Ugo. Silisco is not less successful in his suit, and Rosalba promises to be his, if, through a change in her father's purpose, she should find herself free. She leaves her lover, at his own prayer, till All Saints' Day, to work upon her father's will.

As an illustration of Silisco's character, we shall make an extract from the second

scene of the play, describing the revels of the prodigal:—

"Silisco. Off with these viands and this wine, Conrado;

Feasting is not festivity: it cloyes

The finer spirits. Music is the feast

That lightly fills the soul. My pretty friend, Touch me that lute of thine, and pour thy voice Upon the troubled waters of this world.

Aretina. What ditty would you please to hear, my Lord?

Silisco. Choose thou, Ruggiero. See now, if that knave...

Conrado, ho! A hundred times I've bid thee To give what wine is over to the poor About the doors.

Conrado. Sir, this is Malvoisie

And Muscadel, a ducat by the flask.

Silisco. Give it them not the less; they'll never know;

And better it went to enrich a beggar's blood Than surfeit ours;—Choose thou, Ruggiero!

Ruggiero. I!
I have not heard her songs.

Silisco. Thou sang'st me once

A song that had a note of either muse, Not sad, nor gay, but rather both than neither. What call you it?

Aretina. I think, my Lord, 'twas this.

Silisco. Yes, yes, 'twas so it ran; sing that,

I pray thee.

Aretina sings—

I'm a bird that's free

Of the land and sea,

I wander whither I will

But oft on the wing,

I falter and sing,

Oh fluttering heart, be still,

Be still,

Oh fluttering heart, be still.

I'm wild as the wind,

But soft and kind,

And wander whither I may,

The eye-bright sighs,

And says with its eyes,

Thou wandering wind, oh stay,

Oh stay,

Thou wandering wind, oh stay.

Manager. Now, had she clapp'd her hand upon her heart

In the first verse, which says, "Oh fluttering heart"...

1st Player. And at "Oh stay" had beckoned thus, or thus...

2d Player. And with a speaking look...

Manager. But no—she could not;—

It was not in her.

Silisco. You'll not take the gold?

Wear this then for my sake; it once adorn'd

The bosom of a Queen of Samarcand, And shall not shame to sit upon this throne.

Aretina. My heart, my Lord, would
prize a gift of yours,
Were it a pebble from the brook.

Silisco. What ho!
Are not the players in attendance? Ah!
A word or two with you, my worthy friends.

1st Girl. Why, *Aretina*, 'tis the diamond

Was sold last winter for a thousand crowns.

2d Girl. A princely man!

3d Girl. In some things; but in others
He's liker to a patriarch than a prince.

1st Girl. I think that he takes us for
patriarchs,

He's so respectful. . . — Vol. iii. p. 5-7.

The reader will have discovered that the prodigal is neither a sensualist nor a mere trifler. His nature has strength and movement in it, and it is only the edge of the wave that breaks into froth and loses itself. Yet his heedlessness tends to worse than the loss of his lands, as is intimated by the reply of *Era Martino* to a friend who has found it impossible to refuse him aid in his difficulties:—

"Give thou to no man, if thou wish him well,
What he may not in honour's interest take;
Else shalt thou but befriend his faults, allied
Against his better with his baser self."

We shall next introduce our readers to the heroine of the play, and to *Fiordeliza*. They are coming from *Procida*, and *Silisco* waits on the sea-shore with *Ruggiero*, to receive them. The friends converse of their expected guests:—

"*Ruggiero.* In the soft fullness of a rounded
grace,

Noble of stature, with an inward life
Of secret joy sedate, *Rosalba* stands,
As seeing and not knowing she is seen,
Like a majestic child, without a want
She speaks not often, but her presence speaks,
And is itself an eloquence, which withdrawn,
It seems as though some strain of music ceased
That fill'd till then the palpitating air
With sweet pulsations; when she speaks indeed,
'Tis like some one voice eminent in the choir,
Heard from the midst of many harmonies
With thrilling singleness, yet clear accord.
So heard, so seen, she moves upon the earth,
Unknowing that the joy she ministers
Is aught but Nature's sunshine.

Silisco. Call you this
The picture of a woman or a Saint?
When *Cimabue* next shall figure forth
The hierarchies of heaven, we'll give him this
To copy from. But said you, then, the other
Was fairer still than this?

Ruggiero. I may have said it;
I should have said, she's fairer in my eyes.

Yet must my eyes be something worse than
blind,

And see the thing that is not, if the hand
Of Nature was not lavish of delights
When she was fashion'd. But it were not well
To blazon her too much; for mounted thus
In your esteem, she might not hold her place,
But fall the farther for the fancied rise.
For she has faults, *Silisco*, she has faults;
And when you see them you may think them
worse

Than I, who know, or think I know, their
scope.

She gives her words the mastery, and flush'd
With quickenings of a wild and wayward wit,
Flits like a firefly in a tangled wood,
Restless, capricious, careless, hard to catch,
Though beautiful to look at." — Vol. iii. p. 13.

The young Countess lands, and *Silisco's*
fate is changed. It is thus he ruminates:—

"Hope and Joy,
My younger sisters, you have never yet
Been parted from my side beyond the breadth
Of a slim sunbeam, and you never shall;
Already it is loosen'd, it is gone,—
The cloud, the mist; across the vale of life
The rainbow rears its soft triumphal arch,
And every roving path and brake and tower
Is bathed in colour'd light. Come what come
may.

I know this world is richer than I thought
By something left to it from paradise;
I know this world is brighter than I thought,
Having a window into heaven. Henceforth
Life hath for me a purpose and a drift." — Vol.
iii. p. 17.

To return to our analysis of the story:
The venture of the merchant-prince promises success. In good time his ship re-appears in the offing. All day long it is watched from the harbour tower by one of the Jews. Then its treacherous captain, *Spadone*, executes his plot. About sunset, the good ship *Maddalena* suddenly sinks. Writs are immediately sent out by the Jews against *Silisco*, who flies for refuge to the catacombs on the seaside. *Spadone* has already lodged his booty there. His two accomplices watch for him in a boat outside; but on the appearance of *Ruggiero*, who is walking on the shore, they take to their oars. *Spadone* commits his booty to his mistress *Aretina*, and leaves her, with directions to send him word as soon as he can safely return. In an agony of terror at the crime of which she has just heard, *Aretina* meets *Silisco*, and is on the point of telling him all she has learned, when *Spadone*, who has lurked near them, stabs her. He endeavours to kill *Silisco* also; but after a short combat, falls covered with wounds. *Silisco*,

not knowing with whom he has been engaged, drags him out of the cave, leaves him at the door of Gerbetto, the king's physician, who lives on the beach, and again secretes himself. Ruggiero learns soon after from the lips of a half-drowned sailor, sole survivor of the *Maddalena's* crew, the villany by which the rest have been destroyed. His eye has already been attracted by the signs of guilty terror with which the mate and boatswain fled at his approach; he leaps into a boat, and with the help of the rescued sailor gives them chase.

Rosalba finds herself thus deserted by her lover, and loses in his ruin all hope of a changed intention on the part of her father. She still resists the marriage with Count Ugo, till assured by Gerbetto, on the word of the dying Spadone, that Silisco had been faithless to her, and had induced Aretina to be false also. She then consents to wed Count Ugo. Silisco lies hid on the lands of Malespina, which have now passed into Ugo's hands. He is there joined by Ruggiero, who, after giving chase for a night and day to the fugitives, saw them go down at sea, as he supposed, with Silisco's lost treasures, and had then himself languished in fever for months on the coast of Calabria. Ruggiero resolves to make an effort to prevent the marriage; but it has already taken place before his tired horse can bear him to Palermo. The evening, however, of the marriage-day is kept with mask and pageant. Ruggiero attends the festival, and removing his mask, arraigns the bride for her falsehood. Her reply brings out the statement made by the dying Spadone respecting Aretina, which Ruggiero at once confutes, revealing the crime of Spadone, of which Silisco's ruin had been the consequence. In the midst of the grief of the bride, and her father's anger, the aged bridegroom displays a magnanimity for which none had given him credit. He declares that he can never recognize as valid an engagement contracted under such circumstances, and that the calamity which has befallen them is the punishment of his own sin. On the death of his first wife, he had vowed to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. Upon that pilgrimage he goes forth at once, and alone.

Rosalba, quitting the court, takes refuge in the castle of Malespina. There she lives in a seclusion, partaken only by her friend Fiordeliza. The maiden solitude of the friends is a charming idyll of rural life, rich in fancy, quaint in humour, and set forth chiefly in that finer more and delicate prose, the cadence of which is hardly less

rhythmical than that of verse. At last, word is sent to her by her father that he who in name only has been her husband has died at Jerusalem, and that she must return to Palermo, there to do homage for the lands that have now become her own. She obeys; but before her has returned a pilgrim, Buonaiuto, from the Holy Land. The pilgrim is Silisco, who, on hearing that Count Ugo had set out upon a journey, the hardships of which could scarcely be surmounted by the young and strong, had accompanied him in disguise, and saved his life in numberless dangers. Silisco has returned in time to see Aretina, who tells him just before her death that it was from jealousy, as well as fear, that Spadone had stabbed her, and that the treasures carried off from the wreck had not, as he supposed, been lost at sea, but were buried in the catacombs. The last scene unravels all the threads of a plot very skillfully woven. It is in the royal palace of Palermo. The king sits on his throne, surrounded by his court, when Rosalba advances at her father's command to receive investiture of Count Ugo's lands. Is it certain, the chief justiciary demands, that the Count has made no will? Gerbetto, who at the king's command had attended Count Ugo, and was with him at his death, presents the will of the deceased Count. It provides that his possessions shall devolve on Rosalba if she remains single; but that if she marries they shall pass to the pilgrim Buonaiuto. That pilgrim is Silisco. His suit is not long resisted by Rosalba. Ruggiero, who had been cast off by Fiordeliza, and vindictively pursued by the king, in consequence of unfounded jealousies, stands forth at the same moment, and with Gerbetto's aid refutes the charges that had been brought against him, receiving from the king pardon and restitution, and from Fiordeliza a gift that he values yet more.

There are many dramatic writers whose powers are rendered nugatory by the want of one great gift — a light hand. The gift may seem a slight one, but its absence soon proves its importance. As a specimen of it we will quote the following: —

“Fiordeliza. Let me alone, I say; I will not dance.

Rosalba. Not if Ruggiero ask you?

Fiordeliza.

He indeed!

If the Colossus came from Rhodes and ask'd me.

Perhaps I might.

Rosalba.

Come, Fiordeliza, come;

I think, if truth were spoken, 'tis not much You have against that knight.

Fiordeliza. Not much, you think ?
Well, be it much or little, 'tis enough ;
He has his faults.

Rosalba. Recount me them ; what are they ?

Fiordeliza. I'll pick you out a few ; my wallet : first,

He's grave ; his coming puts a jest to flight
As winter doth the swallow.

Rosalba. Something else,
For this may be a merit ; jests are oft
Or birds of prey or birds of kind unclean.

Fiordeliza. He's rude ; he's stirring ever
with his staff

A growling great she-bear that he calls
Truth.

Rosalba. The rudeness is no virtue ; but
for love

Of that she-bear, a worsen vice might pass.
Again ?

Fiordeliza. He's slow, — slow as a tortoise,
— once

He was run over by a funeral.

Rosalba. He may have failings ; but if
these be all,

I would that others were as innocent.

Fiordeliza. Oh, others ! Say, then, who ?

Rosalba. Nay, others — all ;
I wish that all mankind were innocent.

Fiordeliza. Thou art a dear well-wisher of
mankind,

And, in a special charity, wishest well

To that good knight Silisco. What ! dost
blush ?

Rosalba. No ; though you fain would make
me.

Fiordeliza. No ! What's this,
That with an invisible brush doth paint thee
red ?

Well, I too can be charitable, and wish
Silisco were less wicked.

Rosalba. Is he wicked ?

Fiordeliza. Is waste not wickedness ? and
know'st thou not

The lands of Malespina day by day

Diminish in his hands ?

Rosalba. True, waste is sin.
My mother (and no carking cares had she,
Nor loved the world too much nor the world's
goods),

In many a vigil of her last sick-bed

Bid me beware of spendthrifts, as of men

That seeming in their youth not worse than
light,

Would end not so, but with the season change ;
For time, she said, *which makes the serious soft,*
Turns lightness into hardness." — Vol. iii. p 22.

This theme is resumed in a later part of
the play, when Silisco, to escape his creditors,
flies from the court and takes refuge on
the lands of Malespina. It will serve as an
illustration of that deep moral seriousness
which underlies the gayety of this play : —

" *Ruggiero.* Why hither ? It can bring you
little joy

To look upon the lands that you have lost.

Silisco. To look upon the days that I have
lost,

Ruggiero, brings me less ; and here I thought
To get behind them ; for my childhood here
Lies round me. But it may not be. By
Heavens !

That very childhood bitterly upbraids
The manhood vain that did but travesty,
With empty and unseasonable mirth,
Its joys and lightness. From each brake and
bower

Where thoughtless sports had lawful time and
place,

The manly child rebukes the childish man ;
And more reproof and bitterer do I read

In many a peasant's face, whose leaden looks
My host the farmer construes to my shame.

Injustice, rural tyranny, more dark
Than that of courts, have laid their brutal
hands

On those that claim'd my tendance ; want and
vice

And injury and outrage fill'd my lands,
Whilst I, who saw it not, my substance threw
To feed the fraudulent and tempt the weak.

Ruggiero, with what glittering words soe'er
We smear the selfishness of waste, and count

Our careless tossings bounties, this is sure,
Man sinks not by a more unmanly vice

Than is that vice of prodigality —
Man finds not more dishonour than in debt."

— Vol. iii. p. 42.

In those self-reproaches we find the de-
velopment of that better life which dawned
on Silisco when he first met Rosalba. The
change thus worked in him is a very differ-
ent one from that imputed to beauty by
dramatists whose moralizing vein is often at
least as dangerous as their immoralities ;
dramatists who reform a rake by a virtuous
woman's smile, and confirm the rickety vir-
tue thus produced by the grace of matri-
mony : —

" Since that eve

When, as you landed in the dimpled bay
From Procida, I help'd you from the boat,
And touch'd your hand, and as the shallop
rock'd

Embolden'd by your fears I . . . , pardon
me,

I should not make you to remember more, —
But since that moment when the frolicsome
waves

Toss'd you towards me, — blessings on their
sport !

I have not felt one kindling of a thought,
One working of a wish but you were in it ;

The rising sun, that striking through the lat-
tice

Awaken'd me, awaken'd you within me ;

The darkness closing shut us up together :

I saw you in the mountains, fields, and woods ;

Flowers breathed your breath, winds chanted
with your voice,
And Nature's beauty clothed itself in yours.
Then think not that my life, though idly led,
Is tainted or impure or bound to sense,
Or if incapable of itself to soar,
Unworthy to be lifted from the dust
By love of what is lofty." — Vol. iii. p. 25.

Corruption is not cleansed by the mere
beauty of purity, for it has filmed the eye
that sees purity. Silisco's refinement of
nature is indicated by his forbearance: —

"Pardon me,
I should not make you to remember more."

He becomes at the end but that which
potentially he was from the beginning.
Rosalba had not failed to detect the inner
strength that lurked beneath the outward
lightness:

"Three long days had past
(Long though delightful, for they teem'd with
thoughts
As Maydays teem with flowers) since I had
first
Beheld him, standing in the sunset lights,
Beside a wreck half-buried in the sand
Upon the western shore. I see him now
A radiant creature with the sunset glow
Upon his face, that mingled with a glow
Yet sunnier from within. When next we met
'Twas here, as you have said; and then his
mien
Was lighter, with an outward brightness clad,
For all the Court was present; yet I saw
The other ardour through." — Vol. iii. p. 77.

The following passage embodies Mr. Taylor's philosophy of art. His poetry, and especially this play, may be considered as a practical exemplification of it.

"Silisco. We'll have the scene where Brutus
from the bench
Condemns his son to death. 'Twas you Ruggiero,
Made me to love that scene.

Manager. I think, my Lord,
We pleased you in it.
Ruggiero. Oh, you did, you did;
Yet still with reservations: and might I speak
My untaught mind to you that know your art,
I should beseech you not to stare and gasp
And quiver, that the infection of the sense
May make our flesh to creep; for as the hand
By tickling of our skin may make us laugh
More than the wit of Plantus, so these tricks
May make us shudder. But true art is this,
To set aside your sorrowful pantomime,
Pass by the senses, leave the flesh at rest,
And working by the witcheries of words
Felt in the fulness of their import, call

Men's spirits from the deep; that pain may
thus

Be glorified, and passion flashing out
Like noiseless lightning in a summer's night,
Show Nature in her bounds from peak to
chasm,

Awful, but not terrific.

Manager. True, my Lord:
My very words; 'tis what I always told them.
Now, Folco, speak thy speech.

Ruggiero. 'Tis a speech
That by a language of familiar lowness
Enhances what of more heroic vein
Is next to follow. But one fault it hath:
It fits too close to life's realities,
In truth to Nature missing truth to Art;
For Art commends not counterparts and copies,
But from our life a nobler life would shape,
Bodies celestial from terrestrial raise,
And teach us, not jejune what we are,
But what we may be when the Parian block
Yields to the hand of Phidias." — Vol. iii. p. 7.

The criticism of Silisco on the histrionic art is applicable not less to the art poetic, and its suggestions were never more needed than in our day. We live in a "fast age," but if "he that runs may read," it is to be feared that he will prefer what is written in the largest and coarsest characters, to what requires a more steadfast attention. Loud words, big words, odd words, will recommend themselves more than the unobtrusive witcheries of common "words *felt in the fulness of their import.*" But what the eye takes in as quickly as the advertisements that adorn a railway station, it forgets no less rapidly. The poetry that lasts is that which embodies thoughts, but so embodies them that they sink at once upon the slumbering feeling and wake it into life. But the thoughts which have this talismanic power must be something more than striking, or even original thoughts. They must be *true* thoughts. Thoughts of a lower class may be had in any numbers, thick as the "motes that people the sunbeam," and darken what they so people, but they are barren thoughts.

The extracts we have given are not sufficient to illustrate the singular variety of this play, but we can find room for only one more. It should be premised that Lisana is the daughter of Gerbetto, the king's physician. The king has formed an attachment to her, and pursues it with all the unscrupulousness that belongs to absolute power. Lisana, however, has been committed to the care of Ruggiero by Gerbetto when he follows Count Ugo on his pilgrimage. Defying the king's displeasure, Ruggiero has saved Lisana by withdrawing her from court when its snares are closing

around her. He places her in the convent of San Paolo, of which his aunt is abbess, and in the stillness of that retreat her better mind returns to her, and the passion that tormented her takes flight.

"Ere waned one moon
Of her novitiate, it had pass'd away
Like the soft tumult of a summer storm."

She now bids adieu to her deliverer before taking the veil:—

Lisana. O friend beloved,
Who propp'd this weak heart in its weakest
hour,
Rejoice with me, and evermore rejoice!
Your work is done, your recompense achieved,
A thankful soul is saved.

Ruggiero. *Lisana,* yes;
I will rejoice; I do; though mortal eyes
Must still have lookings backwards. Yet 'tis
best;

The holiest verily are the sweetest thoughts,
And sweetest thoughts were ever of your heart
The native growth.

Lisana. No more of that, my Lord;
It savours of the blandishments of earth.
Look onward only—up the eminent path
To which you led me—which my feet have
trodden

With gladness, issuing daily to the light,
Till meeting now the radiance face to face,
Earth melts, Heaven opens, Angels stretch
their hands

To take me in amongst them, glory breaks
Upon me, and I feel through all my soul
That there is joy, joy over me in heaven.

Ruggiero. Then joy too shall be over you on
earth.

My eyes shall never more behold your face
Till, looking through the grave and gate of
death,

I see it glorified and like to His
Who raised it; but I will not waste a sigh
On what, if seeing, I should see to fade.

Lisana. Farewell my Master calls me
Ruggiero. Fare you well.

I pace a lower terrace; but some flowers
From yours fling down to me, at least in prayer.

Vol. iii. p. 80.

We now proceed to Mr. Taylor's latest tragedy, *St. Clement's Eve*. This play takes up the tale of European society where it was left off in *Philip van Artevelde*, but illustrates it as it existed in France, not Flanders. Charles the Sixth, the boy-king, by whom so bright a light was thrown over the second part of Van Artevelde, is presented to us again, but this time in eclipse. He was subject to recurring fits of madness, during which the kingdom was torn to pieces by the rivalries of the Duke of Burgundy, the king's cousin, and the Duke of Orleans,

his brother. It was perhaps about the worst and most anarchical period of the middle ages. The king was loved by his people, and deserved their love, for in the intervals of his malady he devoted himself to their interests with a tender and profound solicitude. He is described in this play with a mournful pathos.

The Duke of Burgundy is a man of blood, fierce, with a shrewd intellect (the instrument of ungovernable passions), a domineering pride, and a will that knows no law. The Duke of Orleans has not escaped the contamination of a dissolute court, more disposed to respect religion in its outward forms than to obey its commands, but he has about him much that is good, and more that is specious. He is frank, generous, loyal, and devotedly attached to his brother, whom he resembles in his personal beauty and in love for his country. His kindly and courteous manners make him a favourite of the people, while his learning and accomplishments recommend him to the clergy. He represents the chivalry of his age; but it was a chivalry dying out. The spirit of self-sacrifice, the virtuous zeal, and the reverence for purity had left it, and consequently the child-like faith of the middle ages was daily becoming more enervated with those childish superstitions from which neither orthodoxy nor heterodoxy secures the unspiritual and sensual. Chivalry retained its bright accost and winning grace, but the graver heart had departed from it, and the savage fierceness of the feudality it had covered was working out again through the thin disguise.

St. Clement's Eve is, in power and ability, among the best of Mr. Taylor's Dramas, but in some respects it is less satisfactory than it is remarkable. Both in its success and its short-comings it signally illustrates the philosophy of the drama. It is as masculine a work as *Philip van Artevelde*. It is also far more condensed, and the action is more rapid. But the subject throws a gloom over the play darker than that which tragedy requires. We leave it with a feeling of sadness, the result not merely, or chiefly, of a fatal catastrophe, but of the absence of noble characters sufficient to balance the ignoble and the wicked. We have no right to quarrel with a dramatist either for selecting a corrupt period of history for illustration, or for faithfully representing it, yet he certainly loses not a little by such a selection. Whatever the pride of art may affirm, the abiding charm of a poem will ever bear a proportion to the moral beauty it enshrines,—not merely the beauty which the poet has created,

but that which he has found ready-made in his theme. A favourite book is generally one fortunate in its subject, as well as one that makes the most of that subject. The poet works against the tide unless the theme and the characters he describes work with him, and tend to a result which, though painful, still is such as the higher imagination can muse on with satisfaction and peace. There must be a due proportion of sunshine to the shadow, and even the saddest events must be something more than sad; they must illustrate poetical justice; they must set forth the ways of God to man; they must leave behind them the sense that the world we inhabit, though it has its sorrows, has yet its method and order, that it is a region into which angels of chastisement are indeed sent as well as angels of love and joy, but that it is not a jungle beset by wild beasts, or a labyrinth—the haunt of mocking spirits.

A perfect tragic theme is one that presents us with greatness in all forms. There must be great sorrows, but there should also be great characters; there should be a scope for great energies: the event should be the result of great, even though of erring, passions, not of petty infirmities and base machinations. Many a striking theme does not include such materials, abundant as it may be in stirring action and picturesque positions, just as many a fair landscape is deficient in that which a picture requires. Let the subject include the characteristics we have named and very numerous defects, with which the critic may cavil, will detract but little from the reader's pleasure. He will recur to the work when the first effect of surprise, and the admiration produced by the sense of difficulties overcome, have worn off. A poet will be wise to choose a theme that does much for him. It is the one for which he can do most, as, in the long-run, it is the best land which best repays the husbandman's toil.

The subject of *St. Clement's Eve* combines the barbarism of prolonged civil war with the corruptions of a court, and exhibits a social condition in which simplicity has ceased to exist, while refinement has not yet come. It supplies but one wholly noble character, that of the hermit, Robert de Mennot. Montargis and Burgundy are men without conscience or honour, or even that regard for reputation which often passes for honour. The two monks, or supposed monks, are equally prompt at the burning of a witch or the composition of a philtre. Such characters, in their due place, may doubtless be portrayed both justly and usefully. But the

interests of the drama require, and as it seems to us, historic truth no less, that specimens of a nobler order of character should be also introduced in a compensating measure. The best periods have their villains, and the worst have often their saints and heroes: nature commonly produces such intermingling, and art requires it. The chronicles of the time described, full as they are of violence and wrong, delight us also with many a trait of generosity, magnanimity, loyalty, fidelity, and self-abnegation, which need no aid from the romance of chivalry to give them interest. Virtue becomes perfected by the very trials and temptations to which it is subjected, and though at particular periods injustice and wrong may occupy an unusual prominence upon the surface of society, yet true virtue must co-exist with these, both in high places and in low, or society could not long continue to exist. It has but small place in this play. Even characters so rarely presented to us that their vices contribute nothing to the carrying out of the plot, are sketched in colours of arbitrary gloom. The Archbishop of Paris is made a servile old pedant. This is gratuitous. The metropolitan sees were in those ages commonly occupied either by men of ability and force of character, or by the representatives of some great family,—by one, in short, whose faults were not likely to be those of a schoolmaster turned courtier. We find here something of that confusion between the middle ages and the *ancien régime* which M. de Montalembert alludes to as so common. Such bishops would have been less easily found in the middle ages than in the seventeenth century, when in most parts of Europe an oriental despotism had risen up upon the ruins of feudalism. In still more repulsive colours is the Abbess of the Celestines represented, and little as we see of her, we are left with the painful impression that she has worse faults than those which seek a palliation in passion.

"That liberty she grants herself, good soul,
She not denies to others,"

is a comment made upon her by a friend; and we find her stimulating the vanity and increasing the danger of a pupil intrusted to her charge, who has attracted the admiration of the Duke of Orleans. This might surely have been avoided without representing the abbess either as a saintly Hildegarde, or even as a nun "wise and witty," and with more aptitude for the day's work than fitness for a place in romance. Of the younger female characters, Flos, though

energetic and sparkling, is not intended to interest our deeper sympathies.

We have spoken strongly of what we deem the fault of the theme in this play. It is more difficult to speak, without the appearance of exaggeration, of its merits. Its manliness might startle a literary age as effeminate as ours. Not a few of its readers will exclaim—

"What doth the eagle in the coop,
The bison in the stall?"

In its vigour, both of thought and of language, it possesses a merit which to some will be lost in its strangeness—a strangeness like that which we find in the organic remains of a remote age. That vigour belongs, not only to the serious scenes, but to the lighter also, which are of a very different character from those of *A Sicilian Summer*, and preserve something of fierceness even in mirth. Its songs have the buoyancy, terseness, and dramatic impulse which belong to those of Mr. Taylor's earlier plays. In none of his works, perhaps, is his style so consummate. It is at once classical and idiomatic, and it has the polish, with the weight of steel. Above all it is invariably clear, letting the thoughts shine through it, like objects seen through transparent air. This last characteristic is becoming rare in our day, owing, in some measure, to the very degree to which some particular merits of style have been carried. At present, in not a little of our popular poetry, language has been so strained in search of expressiveness, and has thus become such a richly-coloured medium, that it sometimes seems to be a beautiful substitute for thought rather than a revealer of thought, thus resembling those water-colour drawings in which the aerial effects swallow up mountain and plain, and in which the picture might be described as mist with trees in it. In this play, condensation has, we think, been carried too far. The introduction of a few interstitial scenes would be useful, not only as thus allowing the enrichment of poetry and philosophic thought, but yet more in suspending the course of an action so rapid as to hurry us out of breath. That action is occupied chiefly by the jealousies of the royal cousins; and we have not room to trace it in details. They had also their occasional reconciliations, one of which is thus humorously described:—

"To-day they rode together on one horse,
Each in the other's livery. To-morrow
They are to sleep together in one bed.

The People stare and deem the day is nigh
When lamb and lion shall lie down together.

De Chevreuse. Rode on one horse!
De Aicelin. Yea, Orleans before,
And Burgundy behind.

Gris-nez. 'Twas so they rode:
Two witches on one broomstick rode beside
them;

But riding past an image of Our Lady
The hindmost snorted and the broomstick
brake.

De Cassinel. Would I were sure my gout
would be as brief as their good fellow-
ship.

De Vierzon. To see grim John
Do his endeavour at a gracious smile,
Was worth a ducat; with his trenchant teeth
Clinch'd like a rat-trap.

De Cassinel. Ever and anon
They open'd to let forth a troop of words
Scented and gilt, a company of masques
Stiff with brocade, and each a pot in hand
Fill'd with wasp's honey."

The most characteristic illustration which we can give of *St. Clement's Eve* is the following denunciation of both the Royal Dukes, pronounced by Robert the Hermit before the Council. We regard it also as the finest piece of poetry in the play, and as such extract it uncurtailed:—

"Robert. King and my gracious Sovereign,
unto whom

I bend the knee as one ordain'd of God,
A message hath been given me, and I am bid
To tell thee in what sort. St. Jerome's Day,
My vows perform'd, I sail'd from Palestine,
With favouring winds at first; but the tenth
night

A storm arose and darkness was around
And fear and trembling and the face of death.
Six hours I knelt in prayer, and with the
seventh

A light was flash'd upon the raging sea,
And in the raging sea a space appear'd
Flat as a lake, where lay outstretch'd and
white

A woman's body; thereupon were perch'd
Two birds, a falcon and a kite, whose heads
Bare each a crown, and each had bloody
beaks,

And blood was on the claws of each, which
clasp'd,
This the right breast and that the left, and
each

Fought with the other, nor for that they
ceased

To tear the body. Then there came a cry
Piercing the storm—'Woe, woe for France,
woe, woe!

Thy mother France, how excellently fair
And in how foul a clutch!' Then silence,
then,

'Robert of Menuot, thou shalt surely live,

For God hath work to give thee; be of good cheer;

Nail thou two planks in figure of a cross,
And lash thee to that cross and leap, and lo!
Thou shalt be cast upon the coast of France;
Then take thy way to Paris; on the road,
See, hear, and when thou com'st to Paris,
speak.'

'To whom?' quoth I. Was answer made,
'The King.'

I question'd, 'What?' 'That thou shalt see,
declare,

And what God puts it in thy heart to speak
That at the peril of thy soul deliver.'
Then leap'd I in the sea lash'd to a cross,
And drifting half a day I came to shore
At Sigeon, on the coast of Languedoc,
And parting thence barefooted journey'd hither
For forty days save one, and on the road
I saw and heard, and I am here to speak.

The King. Good hermit, by God's mercy
we are spared

To hear thee, and not only with our ears
But with our mind.

Burgundy. If there be no offence.
But take thou heed to that.

Robert. What God commands,
How smacks it of offence? But dire offence
There were if fear of man should choke God's
word.

I heard and saw, and I am here to speak.
Nigh forty days I sped from town to town,
Hamlet to hamlet, and from grange to grange,
And wheresoe'er I set my foot, behold!
The foot of war had been before, and there
Did nothing grow, and in the fruitless fields
Whence ruffian hands had snatch'd the beasts
of draught

Women and children to the plough were yoked;
The very sheep had learnt the ways of war,
And soon as from the citadel rang out
The larum peal, flock'd to the city gates:
And tilth was none by day, for none durst forth,
But wronging the night season which God gave
To minister sweet forgetfulness and rest,
Was labour and a spur. I journey'd on,
And near a burning village in a wood
Were huddled 'neath a drift of blood-stain'd
snow

The houseless villagers: I journey'd on,
And as I pass'd a convent, at the gate
Were famish'd peasants, hustling each the
other,

Half-fed by famish'd nuns: I journey'd on,
And 'twixt a hamlet and a church the road
Was black with biers, for famine-fever raged:
I journey'd on — a trumpet's brazen clang
Died in the distance; at my side I heard
A child's weak wail that on its mother's breast
Droop'd its thin face and died; then peal'd to
heaven

The mother's funeral cry, 'My child is dead
For lack of food; he hunger'd unto death;
A soldier ate his food, and what was left
He trampled in the mire; my child is dead!
Hear me, O God! a soldier kill'd my child!

See to that soldier's quittance — blood for
blood!

Visit him, God, with thy divine revenge!
The woman ceased; but voices in the air,
Yea and in me a thousand voices cried,
'Visit him, God, with thy divine revenge!
Then they too ceased, and sterner still the
Voice

Slow and sepulchral that the word took up —
'Him, God, but not him only, nor him most;
Look Thou to them that breed the men of blood,
That breed and feed the murderers of the realm.
Look Thou to them that, hither and thither tost
Betwixt their quarrels and their pleasures, laugh
At torments that they taste not; bid them learn
That there be torments terrible than these
Whereof it is Thy will that they shall taste,
So they repent not, in the belly of Hell.'

So spake the Voice, then thunder shook the
wood,
And lightning smote and splinter'd two tall
trees

That tower'd above the rest, the one a pine,
An ash the other. Then I knew the doom
Of those accursed men who sport with war
And tear the body of their mother, France.
Trembling though guiltless did I hear that
doom,

Trembling though guiltless I; for them I
quaked

Of whom it spake: O Princes, tremble ye,
For ye are they! Oh, hearken to that Voice!
Oh cruel, cruel, cruel Princes hear!
For ye are they that tear your mother's flesh;
Oh, flee the wrath to come! Repent and live!
Else know your doom, which God declares
through me,

Perdition and the pit hereafter; here
Short life and shameful death." — Vol. iii. p.
125-8.

We cannot better illustrate the two chief
female characters of the play than by the
following passage. Iolande has been giving
friendly counsel to Flos, whose wayward
temper and love of wordly pleasures excite
her alarm: —

"*Iolande.* Last night I had a dreadful dream.

I thought
That borne at sunrise on a fleece of cloud.
I floated high in air, and looking down,
Beheld an ocean-bay girt by green hills,
And in a million wavelets tipp'd with gold
Leapt the soft pulses of the sunlit sea.
And lightly from the shore a bounding bark,
Festive with streamers fluttering in the wind,
Sail'd seaward, and the palpitating waves
Fondly like spaniels flung themselves upon her,
Recoiling and returning in their joy.
And on her deck sea-spirits I descried
Gliding and lapsing in an undulant dance,
From whom a choral gratulating strain
Exhaled its witcheries on the wanton air.
Still sail'd she seaward, and ere long the bay
Was left behind; but then a shadow fell

Upon the outer sea—a shadowy shape—
The shadow bore the likeness of the form
Of the Arch-fiend. I shudder'd for the bark,
And stretch'd my hands to heaven, and strove
to pray

But could not for much fear. The shadow
grew
Till sea and sky were black; the bark plunged
on

And clove the blackness; then the fleece of
cloud

That bore me, melted, and I fell and fell,
And falling I awoke.

Flos. Yes, Iolande,
You're ever dreaming dreams, and when they're
bad

They're always about me. I too can dream,
But otherwise than you. The god of dreams
Who sleeps with me is blithe and débonnaire,
Else should he not be partner of my bed.

I dreamt I was a cat, and much caress'd,
And fed with dainty viands; there was cream,
And fish, and flesh, and porridge, but no mice;
And I was fat and sleek, but in my heart
There rose a long and melancholy mew
Which meant, 'I must have mice;' and there-
withal

I found myself transported to the hall
Of an old castle, with the rapturous sound
Of gnawing of old wainscot in my eafs;
With that I couch'd and sprang and sprang and
couch'd,

My soul rejoicing.

Iolande. May God grant, dear *Flos*,
Your mice shall not prove bloodhounds."—Vol.
iii. p. 135.

Too soon it turns out that there was room
for the warning. *Flos* is betrayed and de-
serted by her lover Montargis. Wooed by
another, she tells him that, before he wins
her favour, he must avenge her wrong:—

"Give me thy hand again. It is too white.
I dedicate this hand to truth and love,
And hatred and revenge. White as mine own!
Dye it and bring it back to me to-morrow,
And I will clasp it to my heart. Farewell!"

Father Renault moralizes well:—

"How swift
The transformation whereby carnal love
Is changed to carnal hatred! I have heard it
said,
There is no haunt the viper more affects
Than the forsaken bird's nest."

We know not how far we can recognize
in Iolande, the heroine of the play, an ex-
ception to the general darkness that charac-
terizes it. At first she has a delightful
freshness, and a purity capable of "disin-
fecting" the bad air in which she lives. She
is tender in heart and soaring in aspirations,
one of those who, if reproached as visiona-

ries, might reply, with the author of *Guess-
es at Truth*, "Yes, a visionary, *because he
sees*." But fate and fortune conspire to take
from her the respect of others and her own.
She has been saved by Orleans from Mon-
targis, who attempted to carry her off, and
she loves her preserver before she knows he
has a wife. On the discovery she breaks
the tie; but her heart is neither restored to
liberty (as in so noble a nature it must soon
have been), nor left in peace with its sorrow
and its humiliation. Orleans implores her
—"O pious fraud of amorous charity"—if
she renounces him, at least to befriend his
sick brother. At his entreaty she under-
takes to exorcise the king's malady by
means of certain miraculous waters enclosed
in a reliquary, the healing virtue of which
depends upon the spotless purity in heart
and life of her by whose hand they are
sprinkled upon the sufferer's brow. She
makes the attempt, and fails. The ordina-
ry reader will account for her failure, not
by her unworthiness, but by the circum-
stance that she was but a dupe, practised on
by impostors. This is not her view of the
subject, nor the hermit's; and if accepted
as just, though it exculpates the victim, it
leaves her death wholly unredeemed by po-
etic justice. In Shakspeare, imposture is
treated with the contempt so sorry a thing
deserves; it is exhibited, detected, and flung
aside. The catastrophe of a tragedy is never
made to depend on it. In this play the
noble efforts of the hermit for the restoration
of France are frustrated, and the most in-
teresting characters swept into ruin by in-
strumentalities too petty for such a catas-
trophe.

We have another fault to find with this
part of the plot. It forces our sympathies
into a painful region of poetic casuistry.
The struggle between human love and heav-
enly love, where each so easily puts on the
semblance of the other, is perplexing to the
imagination. We know not how far we are
to condemn, and how far we may pity.
There is a pity which is "akin to love,"
and another pity which is "akin to con-
tempt;" and in the misty region of insin-
cere and equivocal action and passion, the
two run into each other. The poetry that
describes or adumbrates such conflicts of
spirit and flesh, belongs to what, in writers
very different from Mr. Taylor, sometimes
claims the name of "psychological poetry."
There are struggles in human nature which
even the author of *Hamlet* would have
shrunk from exhibiting in tragedy. There
are regions in the human heart, open to the
Divine Eye alone, into which reverence and

humanity forbid poetry to enter. The hopes and aims of Iolande are noble; her heart was liegefully given to heavenly things, and was worthy of a human love also that should have elevated, not degraded her. There is something, we think, beneath the generosity of art (equally great when it dares and when it forbears), in the exhibition of a contest like that to which she is subjected — one entered upon so unwittingly, waged so bravely, and yet ending so ignominiously, as well as disastrously. Our estimate of her, and therefore of the real nature of her struggle, rests upon that which is itself ambiguous, if we throw ourselves back into the sympathies of the time described. Are we to regard the miraculous relic simply as an imposture? If so, a second spite of fortune has placed a noble and innocent being in a position painfully equivocal. But by the only elevated characters in the play, the healing agency is to the last moment supposed to be supernatural. In that case, its failure would be the condemnation of one who, with deficient purity, had dared to profane it.

In many parts of Mr. Taylor's poetry we find a singularly keen appreciation of the kindred art of painting. The following description will at once enable the reader to determine the school to which the picture described belongs. We are much mistaken if it be not the Venetian.

"*Painter.* There is a power in beauty which subdues
All accidents of Nature to itself.
Aurora comes in clouds, and yet the cloud
Dims not, but decks her beauty. Furthermore
Whate'er shall single out a personal self
Takes with a subtler magic. So of shape;
Perfect proportion, like unclouded light,
Is but a faultless model; small defect
Conjoint with excellence, more moves and wins,
Making the heavenly human.

I spared no pains.
Look closer; mark the hyacinthine blue
Of mazy veins irriguous, swelling here,
There branching and so softening out of sight.
Nor is it ill concealed. You may mark
The timbrel drooping from her hand denotes
The dance foregone; a fire is in her eye
Which tells of triumph, and voluptuous grace
Of motion is exchanged for rapturous rest." —

Vol. iii. p. 170.

This picture has very serious consequences. Montargis, pretending zeal for a friend,

"Whose soul
Lies in the hollow of her Grace's hand
Soft fluttering like a captured butterfly,"

persuades the painter to lend it to him. It is the portrait of the Duke of Burgundy's wife, from whom he has long been estranged. Resolved to procure the assassination of Orleans, who had rescued Iolande from him, Montargis secretly conveys this portrait into a chamber of the Duke of Orleans's palace, reported to be hung round by the portraits of all those ladies who had successively surrendered their virtue to a prince as dissolute as he was captivating; and having carefully prepared the train, he introduces the Duke of Burgundy into the apartment, among the boasts of which is this witness to his dishonour. This is the critical scene, upon which the plot of *St. Clement's Eve* turns; and there are few passages in the English drama in which a vehement outburst of passion is more intensified by every art of skilful delay and artificial stimulus. To appreciate the full force of this scene, one must previously be acquainted with the ferocious, though by no means callous, character of Burgundy. He is thus described early in the piece —

"Other clay,
Dug from some miry slough or sulphurous
bog,
With many a vein of mineral poison mix'd,
Went to the making of Duke Jean-Sans-Peur.
This knew the crafty Amorabaquin.
When captives by the hundred were hewn down,
'Twas not rich ransom only spared the Duke.
'Twas that a dying Dervise prophesied
More Christian blood should by his mean be shed
Than ere by Bajazet with all his hosts.
Therefore it was to France he sent him back
With gifts, and what were they? 'twas bow-
strings made
Of human entrails." — Vol. iii. p. 111.

This is the man who, after years of contest with his cousin of Orleans, has been forced into a temporary reconciliation with him. As daring in his wild fits of half-savage frolic as in ambition, he has entered the palace, nay, the inmost and secret chamber, of one whom he knew to have been his successful rival in power, but whom he has never suspected of rivalry in love. The first sight of the "galaxy of glowing dames" delights him: —

"Ha! were it not a frolic that should shake
Grim Saturn's self with laughter, could we
bring
The husbands hither, each to look round and
spy
The blazon of his dire disgrace."

Then comes a series of pictures, accompanied by corresponding descriptions of char-

acter, presented in a few masterly touches, and strangely contrasting, by the tranquillity that belongs to such delineations, with the storm that follows:—

"*Burgundy.* And then the next!

Montargis. Which? This?

Burgundy. She with the timbrel dangling from her hand.

Montargis. I know not this; this was not here before.

The one beyond it . . .

Burgundy. Not so fast; this face I surely must have seen, though not, it may be, For some time past; it hath a princely grace And lavish liberty of eye and limb, With something of a soft seductiveness Which very strangely to my mind recalls The idle days of youth; that face I know, Yet know not whose it is.

Montargis. Nor I, my Lord; Albeit the carriage of the neck and head Is such as I have somewhere seen.

Burgundy. But where? Familiar seems it though in foreign garb, And whether it be Memory recalls Or Fancy feigning Memory . . . Death of my soul!

It is my wife.

Montargis. Oh no, my Lord, no, no, It cannot be her highness.

Burgundy. Cannot — cannot — Why, no, it cannot. For my wife is chaste, And never did a breath of slander dim Her pure and spotless fame; no, no, it cannot; By all the Angels that keep watch above It cannot be my wife . . . and yet it is. I tell thee, Bastard of Montargis, this, This picture is the picture of my wife.

Montargis. And I, my Lord, make answer it is not.

I would as soon believe that Castaly Had issued into Styx. Besides, look here, There is a mole upon the neck of this Which is not on your wife's.

Burgundy. That mole is hers; That mole convicts her.

Montargis. What? a mole? Well, yes, Now that I think of it, some sort of smirch, A blot, a blur, I know not what . . .

Burgundy. That mole. Oh see, Montargis, look at her, she smiles, But not on me, but never more on me! Oh, would to God that she had died the day That first I saw that smile and trusted her; Though knowing the whole world of women false,

Still trusted her, and knowing that of the false The fairest are the falsest, trusted still, Still trusted her — Oh my besotted soul! Trusted her only — Oh my wife, my wife! Believing that of all, the Devil's brood That twist and spin and spawn upon this earth, She was the single Saint — the one unfallen Of this accursed Creation — oh my wife! Oh the Iscariot kiss of those false lips! With him too — to be false with him — my bane,

My blight from boyhood.

Montargis.

Verily therein Was foul-play worse befo'ld; no arts but his, And theirs who taught him, with their rings and rods, Powders and potions, would have breach'd the wall

Of that fair citadel.

Burgundy. I'll have his blood . . .

Ere the sun sets.

Montargis. A later hour were better; We want not daylight for a deed like this.

Burgundy. I sleep not till he's dead. Come thou with me And take thy warrant.

Montargis. Sir, at your command.

Burgundy. Look here, Montargis; [*Drawing his sword.*

Should a breath be breathed That whispers of my shame, the end is this. [*Stabs the portrait in the heart.*]

Vol. iii. p. 179-181.

A succession of stirring scenes follows. The populace of Paris, infuriated by the return of the king's madness, demands the death of the maiden who had undertaken his cure. The Duke of Burgundy, sitting in council, pledges his word that she shall die. To save her, Orleans hastens to the council, attended only by his page. As he makes his way in the dusk, through the snow-covered streets, Montargis, who, after receiving Burgundy's warrant, has lain in wait within the gate of a house, springs upon his prey, and slays him. All Paris is in commotion, and the crowds soon swarm around the council-chamber where the Duke of Burgundy is sitting with the king's uncles, the Dukes of Bourbon and Berri, and the Titular King of Sicily. The chamberlain, entering, announces the murder. The Provost of Paris, who follows him, demands permission to search for the assassin in all places alike, the royal residences, in spite of their ordinary privilege, not being excepted. The other royal dukes consent. Burgundy alone refuses, and on being challenged by the rest, suddenly avows his guilt, leaves the council, and with his attendants escapes from Paris. In the meantime the body of Orleans has been carried to the convent of the Celestines, where Iolande watches beside it. Montargis, who enters with a warrant for her apprehension and death, is himself stabbed by De Vezelay. Immediately afterwards a tumult is heard without. The infuriated crowd, rolling on like a raging sea, have reached and beleaguered the convent. The hermit entreats Iolande to fly by the wicket. She answers —

"It is I
Must speak and vindicate the fame of him
Whose lips are silent ;"

and advances to the window, when an arrow from below strikes her, and she falls. Once more the hermit speaks—

"Arise, if horror have not stark'd your limbs,
And bear we to the Chapel reverently
These poor remains. In her a fire is quenched
That burn'd too bright, with either ardour fed,
Divine and human. In the grave with him
I bury hope ; for France from this time forth
Is but a battle-field, where crime with crime,
Vengeance with vengeance grapples ; till one
sword .

Shall smite the neck whence grow the hundred heads,

And one dread mace, weighted with force
and fraud,

Shall stun this nation to a dismal peace." —
Vol. iii. p. 198.

In *St. Clement's Eve*, as well as *Philip van Artevelde*, Mr. Taylor has dealt with a corrupt period of the middle ages, but in none of his works has he given us a favourable picture of them. He is drawn to them by their manliness and their quaintness, and these qualities he sketches with a graphic touch, but their deeper and more noble characteristics he seldom delineates. How is this to be accounted for ? In part, perhaps, on the principle of reaction. The contempt with which the middle ages were so long treated, had, before he began to write, been succeeded by an enthusiasm equally unreasonable. In neither instance had a calm philosophy pronounced its verdict. The middle ages had been revived in the form of melodrama, and become the fashion. Second-class poets and romancers had made them their spoil ; every scene-painter had tried his brush on them ; but it was only their more exaggerated and outward traits that had been painted, and admiration had been lavished alike on the worthless and on worth. The justness of Mr. Taylor's genius seems to have been offended by this paltering with truth for the sake of effect, and his sense of humanity to have resented the wrongs of serfs whose oppressors have too often been forgiven because they wore a picturesque costume. The defects of those ages, far from being concealed or palliated, will ever be most lamented by those who most appreciate their great compensating merits. One of their most celebrated vindicators has made this frank confession :—"By the side of the opened heavens, hell always appeared ; and beside those prodigies of sanctity which are so rare else-

where, were to be found ruffians scarcely inferior to those Roman emperors whom Bossuet calls 'monsters of the human race.'"^{*} In the feudal system, the barbaric, it is true, was "scotched, not killed," by the chivalry which expressed the Christian character of the time. But the good existed as well as the bad, and each attained a heroic growth. The general hardihood of the time gave a dreadful hardihood to crime also, and probably in no small degree occasioned the terrible severity with which crimes were punished ; for mild punishments would have exercised but a small deterring effect upon men whose sport was war, and who seldom counted upon dying in their beds. It was not an age of respectability, and little pains were taken to conceal offences,—often, it may be, more trouble was taken to conceal virtues. Men did not then value themselves on consistency. Immense crimes were often followed by intense repentance ; high aspirations were strangely blended with fierce animal instincts ; refined and coarse feelings were tenants of the same breast ; the whole human character was large as well as strong, and its passions swung through a wide arc, and touched the most opposite extremes. The same men were self-sacrificing and cruel, and nature was often trampled under foot by those who yet bore no doubtful allegiance to a supernatural ideal, to whom, in their serious moods, earthly life was a shadow of life eternal, and who regarded all that was not sacred as the licensed field of a rough boy-play. The strange contrasts between the different elements that made up what are called the "middle ages," and the very different character of the periods included under that comprehensive term, render an impartial estimate of them a difficult thing. Mr. Taylor has not, we think, yet presented us with such an estimate, vividly as he has touched many of their special traits ; and we trust he will yet discharge the remaining portion of his debt to a period of society so important on historic grounds, and which has furnished him with such rich poetic materials.

In estimating Mr. Taylor's position among the English poets, both of recent and earlier days, and in comparing the modern dramatists with those of the time of Elizabeth, we must bear in mind that the dramatists of the earlier period are themselves to be divided into two classes. Shakspeare by himself constitutes one of

^{*} Montalembert, *The Monks of the West*.

these, while the whole of his contemporaries and immediate successors constitute the other. The rest, with all their differences of species, are still generically one, while Shakspeare is a genus in himself. Each of Shakspeare's greater plays is, in the highest sense of the word, a poem as well as a play. It possesses an *interior* unity (little as Shakspeare thought of what are technically called the unities), a unity proceeding from the one great idea that created the whole, the predominant sentiment that inspired it, and the exquisite subordination of the details to the general effect.* This unity, piercing at once and comprehensive, belongs alone to great creative genius, and Shakspeare's contemporaries were without it. Ben Jonson, with all his learning and classical predilections, lacked it as much as Marlow or Webster. Shakspeare worked "from within;" the process was one of growth, and the unity latent in the parent germ manifested itself in every leaf and spray of the developed plant. This is the secret of that marvellous judgment which equalled his imagination itself. Starting with a genuine idea, he shrank instinctively from whatever obscured it, whether by disproportion or by incongruity. The other dramatists worked "from without," and mechanically. They found their materials in life and books, and with great ability, but without a true inspiration, they combined them. In multitudes of cases the result is a painful discord; in few is it a complete harmony.

The reader who turns to their Plays in a complete edition, after reading the splendid fragments detached from them in Lamb's *Specimens*, will often think the finished work more fragmentary than the fragments. Again and again, the finest scenes in our early drama lose half their value from the inappropriateness of their position. Take, for instance, Ford's best play, *The Broken Heart*: nothing can exceed in suppressed passion the concluding scene, in which the Princess, receiving secretly and successively the tidings of the death of her father, of her friend, and of her lover with a Spartan's fortitude, replies indifferently, keeping up the court pageant almost to the moment of her death. Shakspeare would have cast the whole play so as to have foreshadowed the dreadful catastrophe; and in approaching it we should have felt as men do when their boat is swept towards the rapids.

*The reader who refers to Coleridge's *Lectures on the English Drama*, and to those by Schlegel, will find the most philosophic comparative estimate of Shakspeare and his contemporaries.

In Ford's work we see little of the Princess, and care little for her; nor is there anything in her character to suggest the marvellous conclusion which thus stands up like a precipice without a mountain-range to back it. This want of judgment in our early dramatists is often a moral even more than an intellectual deficiency. It proceeds from too great a love of the startling, and too slight a sense of the becoming, the fitting, and the orderly.

Another difference between Shakspeare and his contemporaries is the amount of extravagance and rant in the latter. Strength was the great quality our early dramatists valued. When it came to them in the form of real passion, they knew how to exhibit it in perfection, intermixing the most delicate with the most vigorous touches. In the absence of real passion they were often content with its coarse imitation. Giovanni, in a too celebrated play, makes his appearance at the revel with the heart of Annabella, whom he has just slain, on the point of his dagger! Yet this outrage against all genuine passion, as well as against decency, almost immediately follows a scene of the truest pathos.

The same exaggerated love, either of strength itself, or of bombast mimicking strength, prevented Shakspeare's contemporaries from even aiming at his profound conception of character. Their own characters were formed on a different principle, and one for their coarser purposes more effective. To a great extent they are but abstractions, vividly described as are the circumstances among which they are placed. In *The Broken Heart*, Bassanes is not a jealous man so much as jealousy itself embodied, while Shirley's Traitor is not an example of fearless perfidy, but its impersonation. In the comedies the characters are often not even representations of qualities; they are but the embodiment of some personal whim or transient folly of society. Thus, in Ben Jonson's *Epicæne*, the chief character, Morose, might be defined as "a nervous gentleman's dislike to noise in the street." How different is this from Shakspeare! Before his mighty mind there ever stood the great idea of humanity; and each of his characters is worked out of that one manifold type. In shaping it, as much is withdrawn from the universal as is necessary to mould the particular, but the universal remains. This is the cause of the infinite light and shadow of Shakspeare's characters; in them the passions are influences working in conjunction with all else that belongs to the moral being, not tempests

blowing on them from without. Characters thus delineated are so softened and rounded off by imperceptible gradations, that they can only be effective in the hand of a genius who combines with the force of nature her variety, grace, and subtlety. Those only can appreciate the strength shown by Shakspeare, who appreciate also the profundity, the completeness, the many-sidedness, and the refinement, which he never condescended to sacrifice in order to gain the appearance of strength.

The most important point of diversity remains to be noticed—the moral sense. The true greatness of Shakspeare is by nothing so proved as by his superiority to his contemporaries in this respect. Shakspeare does not bring out his moral in didactic vein; but the great moral that always belongs to Nature herself belongs to him who best knew how to exhibit her. In him there are no moral confusions, no substitution of rhetorical sentiment for just feeling, no palliation of vice, no simulations of virtue. The dramatic form of composition by necessity gives a great prominence to the passions, and must also keep in the background that region of the supernatural and the infinite in the immediate presence of which the passions are cowed. But from that remote and awful background no doubtful flashes are sent to bear witness that this life, with all its tumults, is circled by a vaster one. There are occasionally moral blemishes in Shakspeare's plots, and there is not seldom a license of language to be seriously regretted; but this last is far less than in the other writers of his time, nor do we know how much of it is owing to the interpolations of those players whom he commands to deliver "no more than is set down for them."

It is far otherwise with almost all Shakspeare's contemporaries. When, some half-century ago, our earlier dramatic writers emerged once more from obscurity, the public thought that all their offences ought to be condoned to make up for the neglect under which they had long lain. But the interests of literature itself require that in such cases justice should be done. The sins of our dramatists in the reign of Elizabeth and James the First were not exceptional, nor were they but superficial blemishes. The plays of Charles the Second's time were so far worse, that they possessed no compensating merits; but their positive offences could hardly prove more fatal both to the interests of poetry and of society. In multitudes of our early plays the whole plot turns upon vice in its grossest forms,

or a second and foul plot is joined to a sound one, like a dead body bound to a living one. Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* is rich in poetry from which Milton borrowed in his *Comus*: yet it is disgraced by whole scenes of ribaldry; and in the *Maid's Tragedy* the grief of the forsaken Aspatia is similarly dishonoured. Massinger offends less than most of the other dramatists, yet in his *Fatal Dowry* vice almost rejects the plea of temptation; and even his *Virgin Martyr* is deformed by the excrescence of scenes which were reverently omitted in a recent and separate edition of that play.

Such offences have commonly, when not condoned by the false charity of indifference, been regarded only from the moral point of view. The boundless injury inflicted by them on literature has hardly been adverted to. The Greeks were so well aware of the relations between virtue and the liberal arts, that even when the morals of Paganism were at the lowest, a high moral standard was maintained in serious literature. The indirect losses sustained by our early dramatists, in consequence of their defects in this matter, were even worse than the direct ones. They found in coarseness and license so easy a means of amusing the audience, that they were rarely forced to elicit their own deeper powers. Strength to excite, and ribaldry to amuse, sufficed, and they too often spared themselves the trouble of addressing the finer affections, the reason, or the moral sense of their audience. Their works consequently, in spite of some splendid exceptions, lacked those passages of quiet beauty, of pathos, of philosophy, of imaginative grace, and of moral power, which are our principal inducements to return to a book when the interest of story is exhausted. The same fault blunted the best faculties of the early dramatists, and allowed many others to lie fallow. The moral sense thus obscured, man was known to them in his animal relations chiefly. To them the passions were but appetites intellectualized and directed to exclusive objects. They knew little of the connection of the passions with the affections and the moral sense; in other words, all in them that is ennobling, and all that subjects itself to law they ignored. Hence those causeless changes from evil to good, or from passion to passion, which evince so superficial a knowledge of human nature. Hence that lack of gradation, and those movements, fierce and lawless as the movements of beasts. They knew man socially, but did not also know him in his personality, and therefore their

knowledge was empirical. The inner scope of man's faculties had escaped them. In man, for example, the faculty of Observation does not act separately, but in subordination to that interior wisdom which alone teaches him how to observe; — they, on the other hand, frequently delineate it as though the observing eye were that of a dog, not that of a man. The faculty of Reflection, similarly, as they delineate it, works apart from that *mens melior* which alone sustains it with the true food of reason, and inspires its nobler aims. In the absence of spiritual insight, society as delineated by them was often a thing gregarious rather than human. Imagination emptied her urns to bathe and irradiate the wastes of the senses; the Understanding directed those actions the root of which was in the appetites; but the inmost spirit of the spectator starved amid abundance, for the same hand which pampered the body had "sent leanness into the soul." That these early dramatists were men of great intellects and great energies cannot be denied. They possessed all gifts, had they but known how to use them aright; and their genius could have failed in no attempt, had it cared to subject itself to the true and the good. But the imagination which works for the senses loses its spiritual heritage, and sells its birthright for a mess of pottage.

Their offences were those of their age, for they did not rise superior to it. Our age has offences of a different kind, and our literature reflects them. Their offences would not be tolerated in our day; but, while acknowledging the moral improvement evinced by modern literature, we have yet almost always to lament an inferiority, on the part of our recent poets, as regards intellectual keenness and energy. That inferiority of itself has disqualified them for the higher drama. Ben Jonson said of a young competitor, "My son Cartwright writes all like a man." Among our modern dramatic aspirants some have written like women, and some like philosophers, but few like men. Mr. Taylor is an exception. His genius is characterized by robust strength, and the drama is plainly its native region. We know of nothing in our earlier dramatists more manly and vigorous than many passages in his writings, such as, to refer to the plays not included in our criticism, the last scene in *Edwin the Fair*, or that in which the dying Van den Bosch addresses the downcast Burghers after his defeat. His characters are real characters. In ideality they seem to us sometimes deficient, but never in reality; and they are

not merely superficially described, — a thing too common among the attempts of modern dramatists, — but evoked and exhibited with the hand of power. It is this reality which makes one character wholly different from another, even when they have most in common. How unlike, for instance, is the statesmanlike wisdom of Clarenbald, from that of Wulfstan, which is metaphysical, or that of Father John, which is moral! How different is the grave and resolute courage of Artevelde from that of Van den Bosch, which is animal, or that of Gilbert Matthew, which is sullen pride, or that of Orleans, which is chivalrous, or that of the Hermit, which is spiritual zeal!

To return to some of our earlier remarks: the speciality of Mr. Taylor's genius appears to us to consist in its uniting the masculine strength of our early drama with the richer variety, the thoughtfulness, and the purer sentiment of our later poetry. Others among our modern poets have carried farther, some one, some another merit of that poetry. His characteristic consists in his being a connecting link between the two periods. It would be curious to compare the different modes in which the poets of different periods have gone through their poetic education. In our own time it has been the fashion to say that Nature is the only true instructress, and that the mountains and forests are the colleges in which her sons must graduate. Our earlier dramatists generally began with the universities, and then precipitated themselves upon the society of the metropolis, as exhibited at the theatres, where they often combined a great deal of undigested learning with not a little of debauchery. In such a career there was more to develop the intelligence than to discipline that part of our being in which the intellect and the moral sense blend; that part of it from which the most permanent poetry proceeds. We can imagine that, at least for some departments of poetry, the training of professional, public, or official life, may be as auspicious as either of the other modes. It occupies the mind with persons at once and with things, and thus disciplines at the same time the faculties of observation and reflection. For dramatic poetry, which at heart is ever a serious thing, we suspect it to be, in its place, the best school; and it has the advantage also of being a safe, in proportion as it is an arduous one. Imagination cannot be created even by mountains and forests; and where it exists, its products will be great and healthy in proportion to the vigor of the whole moral being to which it is

wedded; for high poetry is the offspring, not of the imagination only, but of the whole moral being.

The relation in which Mr. Taylor stands to our other modern poets must be very imperfectly understood without an acquaintance with his minor poems, in which his resemblance to them is chiefly to be found. With the exception of the exquisite lyrics scattered through their plays, the minor poems of our early dramatists are less known than they deserve to be. As might have been expected, they are for the most part narrative. In Mr. Taylor's, the meditative vein predominates. He has given us fewer than we could wish for; but these have a character of selectness, as if they had been drawn from a larger store. The longest is called the *Eve of the Conquest*. The night before the battle of Hastings, Harold sends to a neighbouring convent for his daughter Edith; and, while the army slumbers around them, relates to her the chief incidents in his life, commanding her to record them, and thus vindicate his fame:—

"The Many, for whose dear behoof I lose
The suffrage of the Few, are slow to praise
A fallen friend, or vindicate defeat.
To-day the Idol am I of their loves;
But should I be to-morrow a dead man,
My memory, were it spotless as the robes
That wrapp'd the Angels in the Sepulchre,
Should see corruption."

The theme is one of warlike labours and of political wiles; but with these a brighter thread is interwoven. The following is the description of the Duke of Normandy's daughter, whose affections had fastened themselves upon Harold while he was sojourning, half as guest, and half as captive, at her father's court:—

"Of these the first
In station and most eminently fair,
Was Adeliza, daughter of the Duke.
A woman-child she was; but womanhood
By gradual afflux on her childhood gain'd,
And like a tide that up a river steals
And reaches to a lilled bank, began
To lift up life beneath her. As a child
She still was simple,—rather shall I say
More simple than a child, as being lost
In deeper admirations and desires.
The roseate richness of her childish bloom
Remain'd, but by inconstancies and change
Referr'd itself to sources passion-swept.
Such had I seen her as I pass'd the gates
Of Rouen, in procession, on the day
I landed, when a shower of roses fell

Upon my head, and looking up I saw
The fingers which had scatter'd them half
spread

Forgetful, and the forward-leaning face
Intently fix'd and glowing, but methought
More serious than it ought to be, so young
And midmost in a show."—Vol. iii. p. 212.

Not less graphic is a very different portrait, that of William:—

"His eye was cold and cruel, yet at times
It flash'd with merriment; his bearing bold,
And, save when he had purposes in hand,
Reckless of those around him, insomuch
He scarce would seem to know that they
were there.

Yet was he not devoid of courtly arts,
And when he wish'd to win, or if it chanced
Some humour of amenity came o'er him,
He could be bland, attractive, frankly gay,
Insidiously soft; but aye beneath

Was fire which, whether by cold ashes
screen'd,

Or lambent flames that lick'd whom at a
word

They might devour, was unextinguish'd
still."—Vol. iii. p. 214.

The record of Harold's early life concluded, the terrible battle and fatal overthrow are described. The poem ends thus:—

"In Waltham Abbey on St. Agnes' Eve
A stately corpse lay stretch'd upon a bier.
The arms were cross'd upon the breast; the
face,

Uncover'd, by the taper's trembling light
Show'd dimly the pale majesty severe
Of him whom death, and not the Norman
Duke,

Had conquer'd; him the noblest and the
last

Of Saxon Kings; save one the noblest he;
The last of all. Hard by the bier were seen
Two women, weeping side by side, whose
arms

Clasp'd each the other. Edith was the one.
With Edith Adeliza wept and pray'd."—
Vol. iii. p. 220.

Eloquence in poetry is a quality as rare as that counterfeited of manly eloquence, rhetoric, once was common among us. If we associate the latter with Pope and his imitators, including much of what Lord Byron wrote in the heroic couplet, to the former must be conceded a place among the merits of Dryden. Among our more recent poets a splendid specimen of poetic eloquence will be found in Southey's "Ode written during the Negotiations for Peace with Buonaparte in 1814." This quality is among the characteristics of Mr. Taylor's

poetry. As an illustration of it, the ode entitled *Heroism in the Shade* may be cited. We can but make room for the last stanza:—

"What makes a hero?—Not success, not fame,
Inebriate merchants and the loud acclaim
Of glutt'd avarice,—caps toss'd up in the air,
Or pen of journalist with flourish fair,
Bells peal'd, stars, ribands, and a titular name,—
These, though his rightful tribute, he can spare;
His rightful tribute, not his end, or aim,
Or true reward; for never yet did these
Refresh the soul or set the heart at ease.
What makes a hero?—An heroic mind
Express'd in action, in endurance proved:
And if there be pre-eminence of right,
Derived through pain well suffer'd, to the height
Of rank heroic, 'tis to bear unmoved,
Not toil, not risk, not rage of sea or wind,
Not the brute fury of barbarians blind,
But worse,—ingratitude and poisonous darts
Launch'd by the country he had served and loved:
This with a free unclouded spirit pure,
This in the strength of silence to endure,
A dignity to noble deeds in parts
Beyond the gauds and trappings of renown:
This is the hero's compliment and crown;
This miss'd, one struggle had been wanting still,
One glorious triumph of the heroic will,
One self-approval in his heart of hearts."
— Vol. iii. p. 254.

The predominant characteristic, however, of Mr. Taylor's minor poems is a certain meditative pathos. They have something in them of Wordsworth; but the thoughts are less discursive and less philosophical; something also of Southey, but the texture is finer and firmer. In the conciseness of their diction lies chiefly the difference between them and such of our modern poetry as they most resemble. In some pieces, as in *Lago Varese*, descriptive poetry is blended with personal interest; the lovely scene there described seems to be impersonated in the youthful "native of the clime," who forms the centre of the picture, and mitigates its pensiveness, though she cannot remove it. The *Lago Lugano*, written in a stanza wholly original, is likewise a descriptive poem; but it gradually rises into a strain of statesmanlike thought, in which the "moral liberty" of light and humble hearts is contrasted with the "civil liberty" of

charters and statutes, and a strong preference expressed for the former:—

"From pride plebeian and from pride high-born,
From pride of knowledge no less vain and weak,
From overstrain'd activities that seek
Ends worthiest of indifference or scorn,
From pride of intellect that exalts its horn
In contumely above the wise and meek,
Exulting in coarse cruelties of the pen,
From pride of drudging souls to Mammon sworn,
Where shall we flee and when?"

Where pride is the poet affirms that freedom cannot be, except in name:—

"For Independence walks
With staid Humility aye hand in hand,
Whilst Pride in tremor stalks."

Two Ways of Life is a dramatic scene, in which the descriptive and the meditative vein are blended with the personal; and the comparative merits of the life domestic and the life monastic are discussed—with as much impartiality as can be expected from two lovers.

Ernesto is a love poem replete with power and pathos. It has no events, but the two characters it describes are finely discriminated:—

Thoughtfully by the side Ernesto sat
Of her whom, in his earlier youth, with heart
Then first exulting in a dangerous hope,
Dearer for danger, he had rashly loved.
That was a season when the untravell'd spirit,
Not way-worn nor way-weary'd, nor with soil
Nor stain upon it, lions in its path
Saw none,—or seeing, with triumphant trust
In its resources and its powers, defied,—
Perverse to find provocatives in warnings
And in disturbance taking deep delight.
By sea or land he then saw rise the storm
With a gay courage, and through broken lights,
Tempestuously exalted, for awhile
His heart ran mountains high, or to the roar
Of shatter'd forests sang superior songs
With kindling, and what might have seem'd to
some,
Auspicious energy;—by land and sea
He was way-foundered—trampled in the dust
His many-colour'd hopes—his lading rich
Of precious pictures, bright imaginations,
In absolute shipwreck to the winds and waves
Suddenly rendered."

How does the lady of his love look on the wreck?—

Of this she saw not all—she saw but little—

That which she could not choose but see she

^{saw} —

And o'er her sunlit dimples and her smiles
A shadow fell — a transitory shade —
And when the phantom of a hand she clasp'd
At parting, scarce responded to her touch,
She sigh'd — but hoped the best." — Vol. iii. p.
259.

The ode with which the volume ends is very fine; but there is another piece which we regard as, on the whole, the most characteristic of Mr. Taylor's minor poems. Few poems are at once so true to Nature, and to that art which Nature owns. The metre is a rare one — that of *Lycidas*; and the long interwoven periods, with their rhymes recurring at wide intervals, like the chime of funeral-bells far off, are in harmony with the elegiac strain: —

"In remembrance of the Hon. Edward Ernest Villiers."

I.

A grace though melancholy, manly too,
Moulded his being: pensive, grave, serene,
O'er his habitual bearing and his mien
Unceasing pain, by patience temper'd, threw
A shade of sweet austerity. But seen
In happier hours and by the friendly few,
That curtain of the spirit was withdrawn,
And fancy light and playful as a fawn,
And reason imp'd with inquisition keen,
Knowledge long sought with ardour ever new,
And wit love-kindled, show'd in colours true
What genial joys with sufferings can consist.
Then did all sternness melt as melts a mist
Touch'd by the brightness of the golden dawn,
Aerial heights disclosing, valleys green,
And sunlights thrown the woodland tufts be-
tween,
And flowers and spangles of the dewy lawn.

II.

And even the stranger, though he saw not these,
Saw what would not be willingly pass'd by.
In his deportment, even when cold and shy,
Was seen a clear collectedness and ease,
A simple grace and gentle dignity,
That fail'd not at the first accost to please;
And as reserve relented by degrees,
So winning was his aspect and address,
His smile so rich in sad felicities,

Accordant to a voice which charm'd no less,
That who but saw him once remember'd long,
And some in whom such images are strong
Have hoarded the impression in their heart
Fancy's fond dreams and Memory's joys among,
Like some loved relic of romantic song,
Or cherish'd masterpiece of ancient art.

III.

His life was private; safely led, aloof
From the loud world, — which yet he under-
stood

Largely and wisely, as no worldling could.
For he by privilege of his nature proof
Against false glitter, from beneath the roof
Of privacy, as from a cave, survey'd
With steadfast eye its flickering light and shade,
And gently judg'd for evil and for good.
But whilst he mix'd not for his own behoof
In public strife, his spirit glow'd with zeal,
Not shorn of action, for the public weal, —
For truth and justice as its warp and woof,
For freedom as its signature and seal.
His life thus sacred from the world, discharged
From vain ambition and inordinate care,
In virtue exercised, by reverence rare
Lifted, and by humility enlarged,
Became a temple and a place of prayer.
In latter years he walk'd not singly there;
For one was with him, ready at all hours
His griefs, his joys, his inmost thoughts to share,
Who buoyantly his burthens help'd to bear,
And deck'd his altars daily with fresh flowers.

IV.

But farther may we pass not; for the ground
Is holier than the Muse herself may tread;
Nor would I it should echo to a sound
Less solemn than the service for the dead.
Mine is inferior matter, — my own loss, —
The loss of dear delights for ever fled,
Of reason's converse by affection fed,
Of wisdom, counsel, solace, that across
Life's dreariest tracts a tender radiance shed.
Friend of my youth! though younger yet my
guide,
How much by thy unerring insight clear
I shaped my way of life for many a year,
What thoughtful friendship on thy deathbed
died!
Friend of my youth, whilst thou wast by my
side
Autumnal days still breathed a vernal breath;
How like a charm thy life to me supplied
All waste and injury of time and tide,
How like a disenchantment was thy death!"

From Good Words.

THE STORY OF JOHN HUSS.

BY HENRY ROGERS,

Author of "The Eclipse of Faith."

THE story of John Huss, the great Bohemian Reformer, has been often told, and is sufficiently familiar to the student of ecclesiastical history. But it may be doubted whether it has been so well known to ordinary readers, either as it deserves to be, or as that of Luther unquestionably is. This is partly to be ascribed to the remoteness of the age in which he lived,—it is now just 450 years since his martyrdom; partly to the character of the reformation he aimed at, and which did not touch the great doctrinal abuses, the correction of which, after all, was an essential preliminary to any radical reformation, such, in a word, as the Church required, and Luther achieved; partly to the fact that the heroic effort he made was not *successful*, and that his memory has been clouded by the subsequent excesses of his followers; lastly, and above all perhaps, to the circumstance that the more illustrious name of Luther has eclipsed that of his great predecessor,—in the blaze of whose fame this bright morning star of the Reformation has almost faded from our eyes. For these reasons it may be well to say a little respecting the principal incidents of his life and the more striking traits of his character, in a periodical, which must have many thousands of readers who have not paid much, or, perhaps, any attention to the claims of the great Bohemian to the grateful homage and everlasting remembrance of mankind.

Nor can any who love and revere the name of Luther forget that it was probably due to Huss that Luther was able to do so much; nay, that he lived to do anything. We may say this, not merely because Huss was a pioneer in the same great work; that he shaped many of the stones, and hewed much of the timber, of that Temple he was not permitted to build; that he made an impression on the outworks of the fortress which it was reserved for Luther to storm; not merely because Luther derived some lights, and still greater stimulus, at an early period of his career, from the history and writings of Huss, as is seen clearly in his letters, and in the allusions he made to him at the Leipzig Disputation; * not merely, I say, for

these reasons, (in fact, all the "Reformers before the Reformation," as they have been well called, are entitled to some of that praise,) but for a more special reason. In all likelihood, Huss was not simply the precursor of Luther, but literally paid down, in his martyrdom, the ransom of his life. That violation of the imperial safe-conduct which to the eternal shame of Emperor, Pope, Cardinals, and the whole Council of Constance, involved the death of Huss, was the very thing which probably prevented the like crime in the case of Luther at Worms. Vehemently was Charles V. urged to imitate the conduct of Sigismund, and violate, for the sake of the Church, the safe-conduct granted to Luther; strongly was he plied by the same casuistry, namely, that "no faith was to be kept with heretics;" but Charles replied that "he had no wish to blush like his predecessor Sigismund,"—in allusion to the story of Sigismund's having manifested so much weakness, when Huss alluded to the subject of his safe-conduct, at the Council of Constance. The scandal of that iniquitous transaction of the previous century was Luther's ægis at Worms, and hence he safely quitted that place which he had entered with such dauntless courage in defiance of so many omens of evil. Thus was Huss probably the saviour of Luther—

Dipped in his fellow's blood
The living bird went free.

The courage of Luther indeed was as great as though he too had died a martyr. During his whole progress to Worms, whither he went with such inflexible obstinacy against all the remonstrances of his friends and the muttered threats of his enemies, it is evident that he contemplated the too great likelihood of sharing the fate of Huss. The genius and maxims of ecclesiastical policy were unchanged; the terrors of Reformation at least as strong; and the inheritors of the persecuting principles of Constance equally unscrupulous. He would assuredly have died if Charles V. had not been afraid of "blushing."

And as Huss deserves the veneration of posterity, scarcely more for what he did in the cause of Reformation, than for the spell

what doctrines that arch-heretic had propagated. My astonishment was incredible. I could not comprehend why they burned so great a man, who explained the Scriptures with so much skill and gravity. . . . But as his name was held in such abhorrence that I imagined the sky would fall and the sun be darkened if I made honourable mention of him, I shut the book with no little indignation."

* "When I studied at Erfurt," says Luther, in the edition of the letters of Huss (1537), "I found in the library of the convent, a book entitled *The Sermons of John Huss*. I had a great curiosity to know

which his name and fate threw around Luther, so his history itself is full of deepest and most tragical interest. In the vast catalogue of martyrs there is hardly a victim whose fate awakens such unmingled admiration for the unflinching fortitude and constancy with which he adhered to what he deemed truth, and suffered for it; or which inspires such vivid, and, indeed, exquisitely painful sympathy, as we read the story. Exposed, single-handed, to the concentrated enmity of the whole Roman Church and hierarchy, as embodied in the cruel Council of Constance, — to Pope and Cardinals, Emperor and Princes; feeling that the whole might of prescription, both of the present and the past, was against him; doubtless often tempted to ask himself as Luther sometimes did, and as Huss was still more likely to do in that earlier and darker age, "Whether it was possible that he alone should be right, and all the rest of the world wrong;" troubled with those tremors of heart which such a possibility could not but awaken, he yet held on his way — though darker and darker at every step — undaunted. Such was the mastery which the truth had over him, so gloriously imperious was conscience, so profound his reverence for Scripture, and so resolute was he, like Luther, to yield obedience to that alone, that he was proof alike against shame and ignominy, cajolery and adulation, promises and threats, and at last sealed his testimony by enduring death in the most appalling of all shapes. This last proof of heroism, indeed, many men have given, both before and after him. But very few, if any, ever passed such an ordeal of absolute abandonment to the "cruel mockings" and wrongs of a hostile world, with so majestic a patience as he did. Huss before the Council of Constance is one of the sublimest pictures in the whole gallery of history.

It is not my intention to give a full account of his life; but a slight sketch of its principal events is necessary for comprehending the significance of the closing scenes of it. It will not occupy much space, for the records of his early years are unusually meagre.

He was born about 1370, at Hassinez, a village of Bohemia, not far from Prague. Huss is the Bohemian name for a "goose," and this furnishes both Huss and his enemies more than once with some rather clumsy pleasantry. It is hard to say whether he or they are more ponderously witty in availing themselves of it; he for the enhancement of his humility, and they as a term of reproach. He was born of lowly

but honest parents, who seem to have done all they could for his education.

He was first sent to the school of his native village, and afterwards to another of somewhat higher order, in a neighbouring town. He was noted from his boyhood for the acuteness and vigour of his intellect, and made good in his youth all the promise of his childhood. He was sent to the University of Prague at an early age; and in the dearth of authentic details, writers have garnished this event with some idle traditions. There is an absurd story, for example, which L'Enfant gravely relates from an old author, that "when his mother took him to Prague to enter him at the university, she took a goose and a cake with her as a present to the rector, and that by chance the goose flew away, an accident which the poor woman looked upon as an evil omen, and fell down on her knees to recommend her son to the Divine Protection" (the tutelary "goose," we may suppose, having left its namesake), "and went on her way with great heaviness of heart, that half her oblation to the rector was gone."

"He lived in times," says the same historian, "that were very favourable to the improvement of his various talents," a proposition which it is somewhat difficult to accede to, considering that the shadow of the "dark ages" still lay upon them, and the *crepusculum* of a better time was just beginning to glimmer. But it may be conceded (and this is probably what is meant,) that it was a period of literary and intellectual activity as compared with the preceding centuries; and his proximity to Prague certainly ensured him the advantages of one of the first universities in Europe.

Of his academic career we know little or nothing, except that it was honourable and successful. Certain dates preserved in the ancient memoir of him by an unknown author, prefixed to the folio edition of his works, inform us that in 1393 he became M.A. and B.D.; three years after was ordained priest, and began to preach; in 1400 was appointed to that function in the chapel of Bethlehem, at Prague, where he became the favourite court preacher of Sophia, the Queen of Wenceslaus. In 1401, he was elected Dean of the Faculty of Divinity and Confessor to the Queen; and some time after, Rector of the University.

In 1405 he had already become famous for his sermons at Bethlehem, preached in *his native tongue*, in which he insisted on forgotten evangelical verities, and inveighed energetically against the corruptions of the Church and the vices of the clergy. It was

in the nature of things that this should expose him to the hatred of the Church. He had been equally fearless, indeed, against the vices of the laity; but King Wenceslaus sarcastically told the clergy, it was only when he began to attack similar vices in the Church that he became so obnoxious to them.

He gave great offence, also, to a large portion of the Bohemian clergy by the part he took in the great Papal Schism; strongly advocating the rejection of the claims of Gregory XII.

But his sermons were not the only cause of the fierce hatred which followed him from this time to his death. Strange to say, there were other reasons for the odium attached to him, perhaps as potent, or nearly as potent, as any of his imputed religious errors, though they had nothing to do with religion. Enthusiastically beloved by a large party of his countrymen, there was of course always a large part of the Romish Church, who, for the very same causes, were bitterly opposed to him; but, had he had no other enemies, it is pretty certain he might have remained safe in Bohemia (supposing it had been possible for him to evade the summons to Constance), as Luther in Saxony under the protection of Frederick. Of course, he had the dominant church party also against him, out of Bohemia; but their hatred was greatly strengthened by the extraneous causes to which we have just adverted, and which it is necessary to bear in mind in order to understand his true position. The first is, the part he took in asserting certain rights of his countrymen to a just share in the government of the University of Prague, and by which he exposed himself to the hatred of Germany. The remembrance of that quarrel, in which the Germans were worsted (and as they alleged, perhaps truly alleged), through the instrumentality of Huss, inspired them with a lifelong hatred of him. Having such important results, the quarrel may justify a few words of explanation.

The University of Prague was founded in the year 1347, by the Emperor Charles IV. It was modelled on the statutes of the universities of chief note in Europe, as Paris and Bologna, where, in questions involving university honours and emoluments, three votes were given to the native, and one vote to the foreign, members. But as, during the infancy of the University of Prague, there was a much larger number of students from various parts of the Germanic Empire than from Bohemia, this proportion was reversed. The consequence was

that the university honours and rewards were almost monopolised by the Germans; and, as the native students increased in numbers, this naturally occasioned much chagrin and discontent. They sought to redress this wrong, and were successful, principally through the efforts of Huss and Jerome of Prague. Huss admitted that the provisional management was reasonable enough, as long as the foreign element in the university was so preponderant. But when that was no longer the case, "It is just," said he, "that we should have three votes, and that you Germans should be content with one." The Germans, however, as might be expected, were by no means content. On the contrary, so exasperated were they, that they agreed, should the alteration take place, they would leave the university *en masse*; and, it is further said, resolved that if any were obstinate enough to refuse taking a part in this *exodus*, he should expiate his guilt by the loss of two of his fingers! a curious illustration of the old saying as to the "humanising effects of polite learning," and not less of the strength of national hatred. Be this as it may, the Germans, (who doubtless thought, from their numbers, that their secession would leave the university as "frightful a solitude" as Tertullian says the Roman Empire would have been if all the Christians had gone out of it,) carried out their threat. And if their numbers had been as great as some accounts make them, no doubt the *vacuum* would have been all but complete. But the figures generally given are clearly fabulous, as is indicated by the enormous differences in the several accounts found in different writers. As reported in *L'Enfant*, one writer says the students were 44,000, which is about as probable as that there were at one time 30,000 students at Oxford. Another, a little more modestly, says 40,000; a third computes the roll at 36,000; a fourth comes down to 24,000; Æneas Sylvius reduces it to 5,000, which Count Krasinski thinks may have been the truth, though he hardly assigns any sufficient reason for preferring it to that of other writers who fixed it at 2000! In other words, we know little about the matter.

The secession of the foreign students took place in 1409, and led to the establishment of the University of Leipzig.

The seceding Germans spread and kept alive among their countrymen, a vivid and lasting hatred of Huss, which formed an appreciable element in the grand total of enemies combined against him in the Council of Constance.

It may be as well to add that there was probably also another adventitious cause of hostility to Huss. He was in philosophy a "Realist." Now between the Realists and their opponents, the Nominalists, the disputes were equally unintelligible and interminable, and turned upon refinements of abstraction so extremely subtle that (one would imagine) they could never stir in a single human bosom the faintest breath of passion! But this would be to credit human nature with far more good sense than it can claim. Whatever men can wrangle about, be it the idlest phantasm of the most crazy dreamer, that they can also fight about; and indeed often with an energy of passion in inverse proportion to the importance or clearness of the point in dispute. Accordingly, these two metaphysical sects often sought to decide by blows what they could not decide by reason: and shed blood and even sacrificed lives for the question, whether an abstract name (as *man*, for example) represented any one man in particular, or man in general. In short, they made more than one university of Europe a sort of metaphysical Donnybrook, where the combatants fought with about as intelligent understanding of what they were fighting for, and also with as much passion and obstinacy as any Irish "factions" whatsoever. Now it has been surmised that the fact that Huss was a Realist, and consequently hated by the opposite faction of the Nominalists, made him obnoxious to many of his judges at Constance. It is certainly not a little mournful, as well as curious, that in this and other cases, the fortunes of Truth and Humanity should often be imperilled by considerations which have nothing in the world to do with either the one or the other; that a man like John Huss may be made a martyr for religion, in a great measure because national animosities have set two communities by the ears, and opposite sects are blindly engaged in a night-battle about an incomprehensible dogma of metaphysics.*

Another fact which undoubtedly had much more to do with his fate, as really exercising a powerful influence over his theological opinions and exposing him to the rancour of Rome, was his attachment to the writings of Wickliffe. It is an interesting circumstance to Englishmen, that from our

remote insular seclusion went forth the influence which gave the chief impulse to the Bohemian Reformer. It makes good the quaint words of Fuller in his "Church History of England," when speaking of the posthumous dishonour put on Wickliffe's ashes:—"They were cast into the Swift, a neighbouring brook, running hard by. Thus this brook hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, then into the Main Ocean. And thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

But that his doctrine should have been conveyed to Bohemia would have seemed as little likely as that any particle of his dust should reach it, in default of that "seaport on the coast of Bohemia," which Shakespeare has created there in spite of geography. Yet so it was; and by one of those incidents by which the Providence of God in the course of its ordinary working easily brings the strangest things to pass, and binds the most distant things together. Our Richard the Second's queen was Anne of Bohemia, daughter of the Emperor Charles IV. After her husband's death she returned to Bohemia, and some of her retinue took many of the writings of Wickliffe with them. Certain Bohemians, it is said, had sojourned for some time at Oxford, among whom was Jerome of Prague: while others add, that two English Lollards found their way to Prague, and were entertained for some time at the house of John Huss, and that from them he got to know the works of Wickliffe. However that may be, and whatever the mode, it is certain that he became well acquainted with several of those works, and that they produced a strong effect on his opinions. At his chapel of Bethlehem, he often spoke in terms of eulogy of the great English Reformer, and prayed that when he died his soul might be with that of Wickliffe, wheresoever that might be!

There is a tradition that the two English Wickliffites asked Huss to allow them to paint the hall of his house, and that on his granting the request they depicted, on one side, Christ's lowly entry into Jerusalem, and on the other, in strong contrast with it, a splendid procession of the Pope and his cardinals, in all the pomp and glitter of pontifical pageantry. It is said these pictures excited much curiosity; that many came to see them, and went away divided in opinion about their propriety. But the generality of ecclesiastics understood the pictorial writing of these Wickliffite Mexi-

*One subtle question, particularly respecting transubstantiation, seems to have been designed to entrap Huss through his Realist creed. It challenged him to maintain the *Universal à parte Rei*, and had like to have given him some trouble.—*L'Enfant*, vol. i. p. 324.

cans too well, and it is said that the pictures created so much scandal that the Englishmen were compelled to quit Prague.

Whatever the truth of these traditions, it is certain that Wickliffe's writings were extensively circulated at Prague at this time, as we shall presently see from the crusade of the Archbishop of Prague against them. Cochleus tells us that many of the "manuscripts were beautifully written and splendidly embossed and bound—*bullis aureis tegumentisque preciosis ornata*." This not only shows the justice of Krasinski's remark, that they had been in the possession of wealthy and therefore influential persons, but it also shows how great value was put upon jewels which were enshrined in such costly caskets. Several of the Reformer's writings Huss himself translated into his native tongue, and took measures to circulate them widely in Bohemia and Moravia.

By such proceedings, and especially by his bold invectives against the enormous corruptions of the Church, Huss had formed a considerable party throughout Bohemia intensely desirous of Reform, and disposed to accept him as their leader; not a little influenced, doubtless, by the fact that he had been the champion of their national rights in the great university quarrel, a circumstance which, though it might operate against him out of Bohemia, vastly strengthened his influence within it.

And now things were ripe for a conflict between Huss and the Church. In 1410 the Archbishop of Prague obtained a bull from the Pope (Alexander V.), authorizing him to extirpate heresy in Bohemia, and as a means to that end, to burn the writings of Wickliffe wherever they could be found, and to prohibit preaching except in certain specified buildings, from which "chapels" were excluded; and therefore, (which was doubtless the real object,) the chapel of Bethlehem, where Huss preached. After much opposition to the bull, it was at last proclaimed.

On March 9th, 1410, Huss was cited before the Archbishop's Court on the charge of heresy. When he, and others similarly charged with possessing portions of the writings of Wickliffe, asked the Archbishop what part of the Reformer's writings were heretical? they were told that "all the writings of that arch-heretic were heretical," and the Archbishop burnt them accordingly wherever he could lay hands on them. At the same time he forbade all preaching in chapels, and thus gagged Huss. The University of Prague protested, but for the present protested in vain,

against the violent measures of the Archbishop.

The ferment spread throughout Bohemia, and the country was divided into two great parties, which in many places threatened, and indeed broke, the public peace. This led to a series of struggles between King Wenceslaus and the refractory Archbishop, into which we have not space to enter, but which are amongst not the least memorable or instructive of the contests between the temporal and the spiritual powers during the middle ages. We can only notice them so far as they severally bear on the fate of Huss. The King, indolent and addicted to pleasure, is said to have cared very little about the dispute, if the disputants would but have left him alone; but if it went on to civil war, he felt that he could not be left alone. Huss also was a favourite with his queen, and to a certain extent with himself. He ordered the Archbishop to indemnify the folks whose books he had so summarily burnt. The prelate refused; and his estates were sequestered. — Soon after, a papal embassy arrived at Prague to announce the election of the infamous John XXIII., afterwards deposed by the Council of Constance. The King thought it was a good opportunity to endeavour to obtain the repeal of the "bull" of John's predecessor, and to secure the restitution of the privileges of the chapel of Bethlehem. But the astute Archbishop sent back, with the embassy, emissaries of his own, who defeated the King's object. They procured the Pope's sanction of the Archbishop's proceedings, and a citation for Huss to appear at Rome to plead to the charges of heresy against him. The King declared that Huss could not go "without peril of his life," which no doubt the Pope and Archbishop knew as well as he, or even better; and refused to let him go. The Pope replied that the appearance of Huss was indispensable, and that the judges to try his cause were already appointed. In short, the banquet was all prepared, and the Pope seemed to say, "Come, for all things are now ready." Thus backed by the papal authority, the Archbishop reiterated the excommunication of Huss, and claimed that his estates should be restored; the King would not comply with the last, and many of the clergy refused to read out the first. Higher and higher soared hawk and falcon, in the hope to gain a vantage point for striking. The Archbishop, nothing daunted, laid the terrors of interdict on Prague. The King retorted with equally vigorous measures; banished many of the clergy who had been

conspicuously busy in the execution of the Archbishop's orders; seized (worse than all!) the treasures of the Chapter of Prague, and made the Estates of the Realm pass a law by which it was forbidden to carry certain causes before the ecclesiastical courts. These measures of retaliation touched what was more precious than doctrine, and finished for the present the contest between the temporal and spiritual powers; and the victory thus lay with the former. The Archbishop agreed to submit the controversy to a court of arbitration, which, on 3rd of July, 1411, decided that the Archbishop was "to submit to the King, to revoke his interdict, to cancel the proceedings he had commenced against heresy, and to send to Rome a declaration that in Bohemia there was no heresy." On the other hand, if the Archbishop complied, the King was to restore his estates, and was to bind himself to punish all heresies, — an easy task, since it seems the Archbishop was to declare at the same time that in Bohemia there were none! And so ended this notable passage of arms between the King and his refractory priest.

As the most illustrious of the successors of John Huss, (who really achieved in the cause of Reformation, what Huss only attempted, and far more,) miraculously escaped martyrdom, so it is not a little remarkable that Huss's most illustrious predecessor, Wickliffe, also escaped it. Both he and Luther died in their beds, contrary to all human probability. And so perhaps might Huss, could he have remained in Bohemia, amidst the tens of thousands who loved, and were ever ready to rally round him. He refused, like Luther and Wickliffe, to obey the citation to appear at Rome; no doubt feeling with them that it was not "good for the health" of a Reformer to go there. All seemed to feel as by instinct that, go where they might, to London, or Constance, or Worms, they had better not repair to Rome. Perhaps they felt like the fox in the fable, who declined the invitation to the lion's den, inasmuch as he had observed that the only footsteps in its vicinity were *towards it*, and none *from it*: *nulla vestigia retrorsum*. If (as already said) Huss could have escaped the invitation to Constance — if he had not severed himself from the thousands of zealous and faithful friends among his compatriots, — he might have remained as safe in their protection, as Luther under that of the Elector of Saxony. Luther indeed ran great risks in going to Worms, but still it was within the "fatherland," and he was surrounded by "troops of friends,"

not to repeat that the very name and fate of Huss probably proved a shield. Huss has been sometimes blamed for his rashness in going to Constance. But, as L'Enfant has shown in his History of the Council, he had little choice in the matter. When he refused to go to Rome, he appealed to a general Council, and pledged himself to appear before it and abide by it; he went not only with the consent of the King of Bohemia, but by his command; and, though like Luther on the way to Worms, he was not without forebodings and misgivings, he yet seemed to be amply fortified by the imperial safe-conduct with which he was furnished. Perhaps we may also say, with Waddington, that he felt not only an "intense conviction of the truth of his doctrines," but confidence also "in the integrity of the Council." He certainly seems to have hoped that he might be able to disabuse it of its impressions against him, and to reply satisfactorily to the charge of heresy. But though hoping the best, he was prepared for the worst, as is seen in that almost prophetic letter of farewell to his friends, written just before his departure for Constance, in which he touchingly says, "Perhaps you will never see me at Prague any more."

It was on the 11th of October, 1414, that Huss commenced his journey to Constance: all through Bohemia, as was to be expected, his progress was a series of ovations. Nor was he unfavorably received even in Germany itself. At Nuremberg especially, the most flattering attentions were paid him, and he was conducted into the town by a vast concourse of people. He arrived at Constance, November 2nd, 1414. He was still without his safe-conduct; but it came the next day, and was delivered by one of the three Bohemian nobles to whose care King Wenceslaus had committed him. It was couched in the most absolute and unequivocal terms.* No sooner had he arrived in Constance than those intrigues and machinations began which had his destruction for their object, and which were too fatally successful. His enemies, many of them from the party opposed to him in Bohemia, inflamed the minds of the people, spread

* It may be seen at large in L'Enfant, vol. i. p. 61. One sentence will suffice:

"Whom we have taken into our protection and safe-guard, and into that of the empire, desiring you, when he comes among you, to receive him well and entertain him kindly, furnishing him with all necessities for his despatch and security, whether he goes by land or water, without taking anything either from him or his, at coming in or going out, for any sort of duties whatsoever; and to let him freely and securely pass, sojourn, stop, and repass, for the honour and respect of His Imperial Majesty."

abroad all sorts of accusations (most of them wholly false), and brought such pressure to bear on the Cardinals—only too willing doubtless to be pressed—that they “promised he should never be set at liberty.” His friend, John de Chlum, was summoned to surrender Huss. That noble Bohemian, indignant at this flagrant attempt to elude or infringe the safe-conduct, appealed to the Pope. The Pope was very polite; declared he had nothing to say against Huss, but that he could not control the Cardinals. De Chlum showed the safe-conduct to all the German princes, and to the magistrates of Constance, but without effect. John Huss was put under arrest, and after being confined for a week in the house of one of the Canons of Constance, was consigned on the 6th of December to a dungeon under ground in the Dominican convent. On the news of his imprisonment, the Emperor, still capable of shame at being compelled to palter with his word, and at the insolence of the lieges who thus set his commands at naught, ordered his instant release. The Council paid no more attention to it than to the expostulations of John de Chlum. On his arrival at Constance, finding his orders had not been obeyed, he threatened to leave the Council to itself, and actually set forth. Some of the Cardinals rode after him, overtook him, and to his own eternal shame so successfully plied him with their diabolical casuistry,—the chief articles of which were “That a General Council could deal with a heretic at its pleasure,” and that “No man was bound to keep faith with heretics,”—that they persuaded him, January 1st, 1415, to seal his infamy by giving his consent that the Council should take its course unimpeded by him.

Forty-four articles of accusation, all charging Huss with teaching doctrines contrary to those of the Church, were presented. The greater part of these he clearly showed were false; others, misrepresentations or exaggerations of his real opinions; and that the rest were not *heresies* at all, inasmuch as they had never been condemned by Pope or General Council, and were in harmony both with Scripture and reason. But there was one heresy of heresies of which Huss was guilty, which would have made orthodoxy itself heterodox. He did not acknowledge the Pope and the Cardinals, even with the Council to boot, to constitute the Church; and like Luther in the next century, appealed to the Scripture as the ultimate and supreme authority in matters of faith. He accordingly refused throughout the entire struggle to abandon any

opinion unless he was confronted by arguments drawn from Holy Writ. There is no doubt that while he held many opinions and practices opposed to the current superstitions, his chief offence was the unsparing and bitter invectives which he had fulminated from the pulpit of Bethlehem and elsewhere, against the corruptions of the Church and the vices of the clergy. While they talked of heresy, this was in truth his great heresy.

Unconditional submission to the decisions of the Council was demanded of Huss, whether he believed them true or not. A curious, and almost incredible, instance of the implicit faith sometimes demanded of the individual conscience in those days is given in one of the letters of Huss, wherein he mentions one of the many visits made to him in prison, with the view of entrapping, cajoling, or terrifying him into submission. It was no less than a “certain doctor” who tried his rhetoric on this occasion. “He told me that, whatever I did, I ought to submit to the Council; and subjoined ‘if the Council were to say that you have only one eye, while in fact you have two, you ought to confess with the Council that so the matter is.’ To whom I said, Even if the whole world should tell me so, as long as I have my senses, I could not say this without doing violence to my conscience. And after some more talk, he gave up the point, and acknowledged that he had not given a very good illustration.”

On his arrest, he had demanded “the privilege of a public advocate,”—the more necessary, as his bodily infirmities, cruelly aggravated by his imprisonment, made him very unequal to the task imposed upon him. This most reasonable demand was refused. A strong disposition was also evinced to deprive him altogether of a public trial, but this was found to be more than even the iniquity of the Council could compass.

Huss was brought before the Council three times; namely, on the 5th, 7th, and 8th of June, 1415, and each time was treated with the grossest injustice and cruelty. On the first occasion, the MS. of his treatise on the “Church” was presented to him, and he was asked whether the opinions contained in it were his? Huss avowed them, and his readiness to defend them; but also his readiness to retract everything which should be proved contrary to Scripture. Here he distinctly anticipates the Lutheran dilemma propounded at Worms. This was met by the no doubt sincere outcry, that the question was not what the Scriptures said, but whether he would retract doctrines

which the Church, as represented by the Council, declared to be erroneous. Huss, began to make a confession of his faith. His confession was not wanted, he was told; but simply that he should answer to the questions put to him, of which that one question just mentioned, was the principal, and admitted of but one answer. He again attempted to enter upon an explanation and defence of his opinions, but was met with rude shouts of derision; and the tumult became so great that Huss was compelled to say (and it was the only thing like rebuke which all his wrongs extorted from him), that "he had expected more courtesy and moderation from such an assembly."—Nevertheless, he defended himself with so much address that he demolished the first charge against him. But fighting thus single-handed (for, as already said, he had been denied an advocate), and in so mortal a struggle, it is no wonder that his strength failed; he was conducted, exhausted and fainting, to his prison. One day of respite was granted to him, when he was again to be brought into the arena like the early martyrs, to face "the lions," or as St. Paul might have said, "to fight with wild beasts at Ephesus."

On the 7th he was accused of holding opinions contrary to the doctrine of transubstantiation, that old and approved test of orthodoxy, and trap for catching heretics; that grim Moloch of superstition, which brought more of the Reformers to the stake than all their other heterodoxies put together. Huss easily refuted this charge, as in fact he never dreamt of questioning this doctrine, any more than did Luther when he began to preach against indulgences. Other charges were brought forward, of which Huss demanded the proof. Instead of giving it, the Council pressed him with the only alternative, absolute submission to its decrees. On this day, the Emperor Sigismund consummated his own shame, by declaring that though he had given Huss a safe-conduct, yet being now informed by the Fathers of the Council that such a document given to a heretic was, *ipso facto*, null and void, he would no longer charge himself with his safety. Well might Huss say with David and with Strafford, "Put not your trust in princes." From that moment he saw his fate; but with that same beautiful patience for which he was distinguished, he began to express his thanks to the Emperor for the protection that had hitherto been granted him.

The last and final hearing, was on June the 8th. The charges were now more

specifically those on which (as already said) his "heresies" really depended, namely, the opinions he had so often expressed at Prague, touching the Pope and Cardinals, and the invectives in which he had indulged against the vices of the clergy. He could not deny these charges, and if these could make him guilty, he could not deny his guilt. He might indeed have been willing to apologise for occasional needless intemperance of language, but he could not say that his allegations were false. The one alternative was once more put before him, of unconditional submission to the Council, or to be condemned as a heretic. He in vain implored once more that he might enter into a full exposition of his opinions. He was told that he must retract and abjure the doctrines contained in the forty-four articles, and swear to believe and teach the contrary. Huss then gave the noble answer "that he could not abjure those doctrines which he had never affirmed, and as to others which he did believe, he would not deny the truth against his conscience, until their falsehood was clearly proved to him." Here again he was pleading as Luther pleaded, that nothing can justify a man's saying anything against his conscience.

In vain he was admonished; in vain all sorts of menaces and blandishment were exhausted upon him in turn. He was inflexible; his truly adamant temper would neither bend nor break. He was taken back to his prison, and as he left the Council, told them, "God must judge between him and them."

At this last appearance before the Council, finding himself brow-beaten and bullied on all hands, and utterly hopeless of obtaining a hearing, in reply to the charges made against him, Huss at last contented himself with reiterating what he had on a previous occasion urged, "a solemn appeal to Christ against the Council." This of course moved only the scorn and derision of this Christian assembly; on which he renewed and justified it. "Behold," he said, "O Christ, how thy Council condemns what Thou hast prescribed and practised. Yes," he continued, turning to the Council, "I have maintained, and still maintain, that there can be no surer appeal than to Jesus Christ; for He can be neither corrupted by bribes, nor deceived by false witnesses, nor cozened by any artifice."

He remained yet a month in his dungeon, and during that time various formulæ of abjuration were proposed to him. Several Cardinals visited him, and plied him with

promises and threats by turns. It was still in vain, and on the 1st of July Huss sent to the Council his final resolution, that he neither could nor would abjure any of his opinions until his errors were demonstrated from the Scriptures. His execution was fixed for the 6th of July. But before that hour arrived one other trial, prolonged and ignominious almost beyond example, awaited him. Every ingredient that could add bitterness to that cup was infused into it. This was the public ceremony of his formal degradation. It is not possible to read the account of that scene without wondering at the majestic patience of the man, or without horror and indignation against the perpetrators of the iniquity, and at the system which made such things possible. The only thing that at all mitigates the feeling is contempt for many of the childish forms of spiteful mummery in which their malice embodied itself. He was commanded to assume the priestly vestments; he obeyed. He then ascended a lofty scaffold, prepared for the occasion, and made that remarkable and noble confession to the people: "The Bishops bid me confess that I am in error. If I could comply, with but the loss of the honour of a mortal man, they might perhaps have persuaded me to yield to them. But I stand here, face to face with Almighty God, and I cannot do this without dishonour to Him or without the stings of my own conscience. . . . How could I lift my eyes to Heaven, how face those whom I have taught, if I were thus to act? Am I to cast into doubt so many souls by my example?"

He was interrupted, and commanded to descend from the scaffold. The several priestly vestments were then successively taken from him by as many bishops, each of whom, as he took his part of the holy finery, (too holy for John Huss to wear,) addressed the poor victim by some too characteristic speech of orthodox irony or malice. The one who took the chalice from him out-heroded the rest: "O thou accursed Judas," said he, "because thou hast abandoned the council of peace, and conspired with the Jews, we take from thee this cup of salvation." Huss undauntedly replied, "But I trust in God the Father of all, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, for whose name's sake I am suffering all this, that He will not take from me the cup of His salvation. On the contrary I have a firm persuasion that I shall drink it to-day in His kingdom." At length came the obliteration of the tonsure, and how to manage this, — that is, (as one may say,) to shave a man already

shaved, or rather to unshave him, — not a little puzzled these sacerdotal barbers. One proposed this, and another that. Huss quietly said to the Emperor, "Strange, that though they are all equally cruel, they cannot agree even in their cruelty." At last they decided, (it is said, but it is to be hoped falsely,) to cut with scissors a portion of the scalp. They had now, as they deemed, deprived him of all ecclesiastic symbols of honour and privilege, and nothing remained but to hand him over to the secular arm; but their childish malice suddenly recollected that one thing was still omitted. A large paper cap, painted with grotesque figures of devils, and inscribed with the word "*HERESIARCHA*," was placed on his head. When Huss saw it he said, "Our Lord wore a crown of thorns for my sake, why should I not wear this light, though ignominious cap for His?" The bishops in putting it on said, "We deliver thy body to the flames, and thy soul to the devil." Huss, lifting his eyes, replied, "Into thy hands, O Jesus Christ, I commend my soul which thou hast redeemed."

After this, he was led to the place of execution, just beyond the gate of Gottlieben, where carcases were usually flayed, and where much carrion had been recently strewn about, in order to add to the ignominy of the punishment. On his way, Huss had seen his more immortal part, — his books, — already burning. It only moved a smile, perhaps, at the childishness, perhaps at the futility, of the malice of his enemies. On arriving at the pile, his countenance we are told lighted up with animation. With a loud and clear voice he recited the 31st, and 81st Psalms, and prayed for some time. After one more vain attempt to extract a retraction from him, the fire was lighted. The fuel had only been piled up to his knees, and when burnt down, the upper part of his body was found unconsumed, and hanging on the stake by the chain; the flames were again kindled, and the heart of the refractory heretic having been torn from his body, and beaten and broken with clubs, was separately burnt. But happily, of this supplementary martyrdom, Huss knew nothing. He seems to have been suffocated, rather than burnt, shortly after the fire was kindled, and just after he had uttered with a loud voice his last words, "Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me!"

The ashes were carefully collected and cast into the Rhine, whence, (as Fuller said of those of Wickliffe, cast into the Avon,) they have been carried into the "main

ocean," and so are an "emblem of his doctrine, diffused throughout the world."

As the voluminous accounts of martyrdom scarcely present us with any scene that reminds us more strongly of our blessed Lord in the hall of Pilate and amidst the soldiers of Herod: so, there is none in which the example of the great Master has been more completely copied by the disciple. The patience, dignity, and fortitude of a Christian were marvellously displayed in the whole deportment of the martyr. He "partook of the sufferings of Christ" and "the glory of Christ rested on him." It was something wonderful, that, as he was of too high and hardy a spirit to quail under the accumulated wrongs and cruelties of his persecutors, this very spirit did not betray him into momentary passion or irritation: that after being so fiercely chased he did not at last turn on the hunters, and resent, with unseemly defiance, the insufferable indignities heaped upon him. Luther would certainly have raged like a lion in the toils; Huss was led as "a lamb to the slaughter."

But this is only half his praise; he was inflexible as gentle. Neither the open violence of the Council, nor the artful interrogatories with which he was plied in prison; neither threats and intimidations, nor promises and cajolery; nor, what was hardest to resist of all, the earnest importunities of friendly voices, could warp his steadfast spirit. And this inflexibility, conjoined with such meekness and patience, gave to the character and conduct of Huss, an air of moral sublimity which the world has rarely seen equalled. Even the page of *L'Enfant*, the copious chronicler of the Council of Constance, one of the most honest and laborious, but also one of the dullest, of historians, lights up with a glimmer of animation, and is ruffled with something like energy and pathos, when he comes to depict the closing scenes of the life of the great Bohemian Reformer.*

*One of the most touching and noble appeals made to the Reformer is that of John de Chlum; an appeal which, though it must have cost Huss a pang to part with such a friend, must have sounded in his ears, had he needed such a stimulus, like a trumpet. When every hope was lost, and De Chlum was about to separate from the martyr for the last time, he addressed him in these words:—

"My beloved Master, — I am unlettered, and consequently unfit to counsel one so enlightened as you. Nevertheless, if you are secretly conscious of any one of those errors which have been publicly imputed to you, I do entreat you not to feel any shame in retracting it; but if, on the contrary, you are convinced of your innocence, I am so far from advising you to say anything against your conscience, that I exhort you rather to endure every form of torture than to renounce anything that you hold to be true." Huss replied with tears, that God

Thus perished this man, after as terrible and prolonged a fight with the "principalities, and powers of this world," close leagued with those of "darkness," as ever was fought by martyr or confessor; — the more terrible that it was fought by him alone, the first of the long and illustrious procession of martyrs of Reformation who were destined, with "the irresistible might of weakness," (as Milton has it,) "to shake the Powers of Darkness, and scorn the fiery rage of the Old Red Dragon." Huss trod his dark path alone, unsupported by the example of that "cloud of witnesses" who gave courage to his successors: by himself was he to hush the doubts which could not but assail any man who undertook to assert his opinions against the voice of all prescription, armed with all power; and this, too, amidst imprisonment, sickness, "cruel mockings," and every form of wrong. In a word, he drank the cup of martyrdom drop by drop, with every conceivable ingredient of bitterness in it, — involving in all probability, a sum of suffering of which, after all, the last brief fiery agony was the least part. To the deep shadows which often rested on his soul, amidst his prison solitude, there are some touching allusions in his letters; he there speaks of the dark forebodings which troubled him, and of the terrible dreams which sometimes haunted his sleep.*

As we read the tragic story, it is impossible not to feel our indignation kindle against the corrupt Church which burned him, or murmuring with those souls beneath the altar, "How long, O Lord, how long?"

While it is true that John Huss was a pioneer of the Reformation, it is also true that the Reformation he sought was not of doctrine so much as of morals and of government. He pleaded, quite justly, that he was not guilty of the heresies of which his enemies accused him: he was, as already said, burned for very different reasons. He was orthodox on transubstantiation, believed in the intercession of saints, worshipped the Virgin Mother, held by purgatory and prayers for the dead; and, though he thought the cup ought to be given to the laity, did not make even that, (which was the bond and characteristic symbol of his followers,) an essential point. In inveighing against the monstrous evils of the great Schism,

was his witness, how ready he had ever been, and still was, to retract on oath, and with his whole heart, from the moment he should be convicted of any error by evidence from Holy Scripture.

*Especially in letters xxiii, xxxii, *Huss, Oper.* In one, he speaks of a dream in which frightful serpents seemed to be crawling about him.

against the corruptions in the government of the Church, and the vices of her ministers, he had done little more than many others both before him and after him. Nay, at Constance itself almost equal freedom was used. But, as Waddington justly observes, the offence of Huss consisted in this—that the “Bible,” and not the “Church,” was the source of his reforming zeal.

It would have been well if the Reformation that Huss contemplated had included dogma; for there could be no effectual reformation without it. Hence chiefly it was that Luther's was more durable and efficacious. Both reformers had their eyes first opened by those moral enormities which most readily struck the sense, and which were the *ne plus ultra* of the recession of the Church from Christian truth. Both spoke with almost equal vehemence against false miracles, indulgences, and the vices of the clergy. But Luther looked further, and saw deeper; and attacked, one after another, those corruptions of doctrine which were the secret roots of the evils in practice. So little force is there in the modern and too favourite notion, that dogma is of little or no consequence, or that one set of dogmas is nearly as good as another! Looking at men *in general*, as are their *convictions* (supposing these firm and sincere), such also will be their life, whether good or evil. The superstition which buries truth, and the scepticism which doubts whether there be any, are in the end almost equally pernicious to the morals of mankind; both alike tend to repress all that is noble and magnanimous in our nature. What we find true in politics, is certainly not less true in theology; and we all know what sort of patriot and statesman *he* is likely to prove who believes that it matters not what party-badge he wears or what political creed he professes; who doubts whether it be not wisest to let the world jog on as it will, and to acquiesce in any time-honoured abuse, or inveterate corruption which it will give trouble and involve sacrifice to extirpate. But there is this difference in the two cases, that the world will tolerate in theology the character which it is too astute not to abhor in politics.

It is in vain, however, to blame Huss for not going deeper or further. He lived a century before Luther; and neither he nor his contemporaries were prepared in the fifteenth century to receive or act upon views which were feasible only in the sixteenth. But to this high praise he is unquestionably entitled, that he asserted the very same maxim on which Luther justified his

resistance at Worms,—the absolute supremacy of conscience, unless its errors be demonstrated by clear proof from what both of them affirmed to be alone the ultimate authority in matters of faith,—the Scripture. Though much more than this is required for a full and consistent system of religious liberty, it was a large instalment of it; and for vindicating so much of the great charter of the “Rights of Conscience,” and ratifying it with a martyr's seal, John Huss is entitled to be held in lasting and grateful remembrance.

It has been seen that really Huss penetrated very imperfectly into the evils of Popery. By some, however, the contrary would seem to be assumed; for he has been represented, not only as the precursor but the prophet of the Reformation; and an appeal has been made to certain medals, (supposed to have been struck contemporaneously with his death, or shortly after it,) inscribed with a prediction that “after a hundred years his oppressors should answer to God and to him — ‘*Centum revolutis annis Deo respondebitis et mihi.*’”

L'Enfant has examined this matter with his usual fullness and fairness, and shown that there is no ground for supposing these medals to be anterior to the Lutheran Reformation, and that there is nothing in any of the acknowledged remains of Huss, which show that he pretended to anything more than merely mortal presages as to the future of the papacy. It is true there are expressions which show that he felt convinced that the evils of the Church were so enormous that a time of Reformation must come; that a tree so rotten must fall. But they only prove that he saw what many a mind between Huss and Luther saw as clearly. Nor is it possible to read many of the satires on the clergy during the middle ages, without being convinced that those who have wrote and read them must have divined that a system, the corruptions of which were so notorious, so odious, and so *ridiculed*, could not be very long maintained. It was a probability on which any mind of more than moderate perspicuity might safely speculate; just as we may *now* confidently predict from the present symptoms and position of the Papacy that it will, within a very short time, perhaps in less than one brief year, be the subject of startling revolutions. There it stands, an anachronism in the world's history; with all its errors stereotyped; stationary amidst progress, and immutable amidst change; showing in the late Encyclical that it does not in the slightest degree recede from aspirations and pretensions to which it is im-

possible to give effect; regarding all that passes around it with a smile of senile madness; the patron still, so far as it can or dare act upon them, of the very principles which led it to persecute Huss and Luther; the lion still, but an old lion, with teeth broken and claws pared; with the worst possible government of its own, and acting as a universal obstructive (wheresoever it has influence) to the formation of others that are better; giving the world infinite plague, and a source of perpetual difficulty and worry to Europe; with its subject nations more and more divided as to the extent of their allegiance, and as to the measure of the faith to be reposed in its Decrees; while on the other hand, we see it about to be deserted by the secular supports which have so long upheld it, and challenged to try whether it can keep itself from tumbling down. If the French Emperor had studied, for ten years together, how to involve it in difficulties, and perhaps Europe with it, he could not have thought of anything better than his somewhat enigmatical "Convention." Whether fairly carried out with all its appendant conditions, or not, it offers almost equally perilous alternatives to Rome. It is impossible for any man not to presage—as Huss and Luther could in their day—that a time of startling change is at hand.

If we could put faith in what most of us must always be very distrustful of,—the interpretation of *unfulfilled* prophecy, it would be difficult not to be startled by the singular coincidence that the *time* fixed by many interpreters, (and some of them lived long ago,) for the *dénouement* of the great papal drama synchronises with that fixed for carrying out the imperial Convention, namely, the year 1866; for surely it is not easy to imagine the Emperor Napoleon determining his policy by conjectural interpretations of the Apocalypse! It is very certain, not only that some recent interpreters have fixed on that year as being a significant epoch for the Papacy, but that Fleming, more than a hundred and fifty years ago, predicted that *either* 1848 or 1866, according as we

read the prophetic year by the Julian calendar, or otherwise, would be thus significant. In point of fact, both periods have been very significant,—the first as heralding the European Revolutions (and amongst them, that at Rome) which led to the occupation of Rome by the French; and the second as signalised by the imperial Convention which is to terminate it. But, as already said, it is impossible not to distrust minute interpretations of *unfulfilled* prophecy. While we hold with Bishop Butler, that it is impossible for any man who compares the history of the world with the prophetic pages of the Bible, not to be struck with the general conformity between them; and, while we may well believe that, as the scroll of the future is read by the light of events, that view will be strongly corroborated, it is difficult to imagine, from the very nature of prophecy, (addressed as it is to a world governed by moral laws, and yet predicting events which are to admit of no possibility of being either accelerated or frustrated,) that it can be otherwise than conjecturally interpreted. He who would pry too closely into unfulfilled prophecy, is like the too curious Athenian, who wished to know "what it was that the philosopher was carrying concealed under his cloak?" "I carry it there," was the reply, "for the very purpose of concealing it." It is much the same with the enigmas of unfulfilled prophecy till the event makes them plain. And if we too importunately inquire as to the future, that may be said to us, which was said to those who asked the Saviour, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power."

Meanwhile, it does not require any great sagacity to believe that startling changes are coming upon that wonderful fabric which it took so many centuries to compact, and has already taken so many to disintegrate; that, "after the Convention," chaos; and that none need particularly covet to be in Rome in the month of December, 1866.

CHAPTER LX.

ROGER HAMLEY'S CONFESSION.

ROGER had a great deal to think of as he turned away from looking after the carriage as long as it could be seen. The day before, he had believed that Molly had come to view all the symptoms of his growing love for her, — symptoms which he thought had been so patent, — as disgusting inconstancy to the inconstant Cynthia; that she had felt that an attachment which could so soon be transferred to another was not worth having; and that she had desired to mark all this by her changed treatment of him, and so to nip it in the bud. But this morning her old sweet, frank manner had returned — in their last interview, at any rate. He puzzled himself hard to find out what could have distressed her at breakfast-time. He even went so far as to ask Robinson whether Miss Gibson had received any letters that morning; and when he heard that she had had one, he tried to believe that the letter was in some way the cause of her sorrow. So far so good. They were friends again after their unspoken difference; but that was not enough for Roger. He felt every day more and more certain that she, and she alone, could make him happy. He had felt this, and had partly given up all hope, while his father had been urging upon him the very course he most desired to take. No need for "trying" to love her, he said to himself, — that was already done. And yet he was very jealous on her behalf. Was that love worthy of her which had once been given to Cynthia? Was not this affair too much a mocking mimicry of the last? Again just on the point of leaving England for a considerable time! If he followed her now to her own home, — in the very drawing-room where he had once offered to Cynthia! And then by a strong resolve he determined on this course. They were friends now, and he kissed the rose that was her pledge of friendship. If he went to Africa, he ran some deadly chances; he knew better what they were now than he had done when he went before. Until his return he would not even attempt to win more of her love than he already had. But once safe home again, no weak fancies as to what might or might not be her answer should prevent his running all chances to gain the woman who was to him the one who excelled all. His was not the poor vanity that thinks more of the possible mortification of a refusal than of the precious jewel of a bride that may be won. Somehow or another,

please God to send him back safe, he would put his fate to the touch. And till then he would be patient. He was no longer a boy to rush at the coveted object; he was a man capable of judging and abiding.

Molly sent her father, as soon as she could find him, to the Hall; and then sat down to the old life in the home drawing-room, where she missed Cynthia's bright presence at every turn. Mrs. Gibson was in rather a querulous mood, which fastened itself upon the injury of Cynthia's letter being addressed to Molly, and not to herself.

"Considering all the trouble I had with her trousseau, I think she might have written to me."

"But she did — her first letter was to you, mamma," said Molly, her real thoughts still intent upon the Hall — upon the sick child — upon Roger, and his begging for the flower.

"Yes, just a first letter, three pages long, with an account of her crossing; while to you she can write about fashions, and how the bonnets are worn in Paris, and all sorts of interesting things. But poor mothers must never expect confidential letters, I have found that out."

"You may see my letter, mamma," said Molly; "there is really nothing in it."

"And to think of her writing, and crossing to you who don't value it, while my poor heart is yearning after my lost child! Really life is somewhat hard to bear at times."

Then there was a silence — for a while.

"Do tell me something about your visit, Molly. Is Roger very heart-broken? Does he talk much about Cynthia?"

"No. He does not mention her often; hardly ever, I think."

"I never thought he had much feeling. If he had had, he would not have let her go so easily."

"I don't see how he could help it. When he came to see her after his return, she was already engaged to Mr. Henderson — he had come down that very day," said Molly, with perhaps more heat than the occasion required.

"My poor head!" said Mrs. Gibson, putting her hands up to her head. "One may see you've been stopping with people of robust health, and — excuse my saying it, Molly, of your friends — of unrefined habits, you've got to talk in so loud a voice. But do remember my head, Molly. So Roger has quite forgotten Cynthia, has he? Oh! what inconstant creatures men are! He will be falling in love with some grandee next, mark my words! They are making a

pet and a lion of him, and he's just the kind of weak young man to have his head turned by it all; and to propose to some fine lady of rank, who would no more think of marrying him than of marrying her footman."

"I don't think it is likely," said Molly, stoutly. "Roger is too sensible for anything of the kind."

"That's just the fault I always found with him; sensible and cold-hearted! Now, that's a kind of character which may be very valuable, but which revolts me. Give me warmth of heart, even with a little of that extravagance of feeling which misleads the judgment, and conducts into romance. Poor Mr Kirkpatrick! That was just his character. I used to tell him that his love for me was quite romantic. I think I have told you about his walking five miles in the rain to get me a muffin once when I was ill?"

"Yes!" said Molly. "It was very kind of him."

"So imprudent, too! Just what one of your sensible, cold-hearted, commonplace people would never have thought of doing. With his cough and all."

"I hope he didn't suffer for it?" replied Molly, anxious at any cost to keep off the subject of the Hamleys, upon which she and her stepmother always disagreed, and on which she found it difficult to keep her temper.

"Yes, indeed, he did! I don't think he ever got over the cold he caught that day. I wish you had known him, Molly. I sometimes wonder what would have happened if you had been my real daughter, and Cynthia dear papa's, and Mr. Kirkpatrick and your own dear mother had all lived. People talk a good deal about natural affinities. It would have been a question for a philosopher." She began to think on the impossibilities she had suggested.

"I wonder how the poor little boy is?" said Molly, after a pause, speaking out her thought.

"Poor little child! When one thinks how little his prolonged existence is to be desired, one feels that his death would be a boon."

"Mamma! what do you mean?" asked Molly, much shocked. "Why every one cares for his life as the most precious thing! You have never seen him! He is the bonniest, sweetest little fellow that can be! What do you mean?"

"I should have thought that the squire would have desired a better-born heir than the offspring of a servant, — with all his ideas about descent, and blood, and family. And

I should have thought that it was a little mortifying to Roger — who must naturally have looked upon himself as his brother's heir — to find a little interloping child, half French, half English, stepping into his shoes!"

"You don't know how fond they are of him, — the squire looks upon him as the apple of his eye."

"Molly! Molly! pray don't let me hear you using such vulgar expressions. When shall I teach you true refinement — that refinement which consists in never even thinking a vulgar, commonplace thing? Proverbs and idioms are never used by people of education. 'Apple of his eye!' I am really shocked."

"Well, mamma, I'm very sorry; but after all, what I wanted to say as strongly as I could was, that the squire loves the little boy as much as his own child; and that Roger — oh! what a shame to think that Roger — And she stopped suddenly short, as if she were choked.

"I don't wonder at your indignation, my dear!" said Mrs. Gibson. "It is just what I should have felt at your age. But one learns the baseness of human nature with advancing years. I was wrong, though, to undeceive you so early — but depend upon it, the thought I alluded to has crossed Roger Hamley's mind!"

"All sorts of thoughts cross one's mind — it depends upon whether one gives them harbour and encouragement," said Molly.

"My dear, if you must have the last word, don't let it be a truism. But let us talk on some more interesting subject. I asked Cynthia to buy me a silk gown in Paris, and I said I would send her word what colour I fixed upon — I think dark blue is the most becoming to my complexion; what do you say?"

Molly agreed, sooner than take the trouble of thinking about the thing at all; she was far too full of her silent review of all the traits in Roger's character which had lately come under her notice, and that gave the lie direct to her stepmother's supposition. Just then they heard Mr. Gibson's step downstairs. But it was some time before he made his entrance into the room where they were sitting.

"How is little Roger?" said Molly, eagerly.

"Beginning with scarlet fever, I'm afraid. It's well you left when you did, Molly. You've never had it. We must stop up all intercourse with the Hall for a time. If there's one illness I dread, it is this."

"But you go and come back to us, papa."

"Yes. But I always take plenty of precautions. However, no need to talk about risks that lie in the way of one's duty. It is unnecessary risks that we must avoid."

"Will he have it badly?" asked Molly.

"I can't tell. I shall do my best for the wee laddie."

Whenever Mr. Gibson's feelings were touched, he was apt to recur to the language of his youth. Molly knew now that he was much interested in the case.

For some days there was imminent danger to the little boy; for some weeks there was a more chronic form of illness to contend with; but when the immediate danger was over and the warm daily interest was past, Molly began to realize that, from the strict quarantine her father evidently thought it necessary to establish between the two houses, she was not likely to see Roger again before his departure for Africa. Oh! if she had but made more of the uncared-for days that she had passed with him at the Hall! Worse than uncared for; days on which she had avoided him; refused to converse freely with him; given him pain by her change of manner; for she had read in his eyes, heard in his voice, that he had been perplexed and pained, and now her imagination dwelt on and exaggerated the expression of his tones and looks.

One evening after dinner, her father said,—

"As the country-people say, I've done a stroke of work to-day. Roger Hamley and I have laid our heads together, and we have made a plan by which Mrs. Osborne and her boy will leave the Hall."

"What did I say the other day, Molly?" said Mrs. Gibson, interrupting, and giving Molly a look of extreme intelligence.

"And go into lodgings at Jennings' farm; not four hundred yards from the Park-field gate," continued Mr. Gibson. "The squire and his daughter-in-law have got to be much better friends over the little fellow's sick-bed; and I think he sees now how impossible it would be for the mother to leave her child, and go and be happy in France, which has been the notion running in his head all this time. To buy her off, in fact. But that one night, when I was very uncertain whether I could bring him through, they took to crying together, and condoling with each other; and it was just like tearing down a curtain that had been between them; they have been rather friends than otherwise ever since. Still Roger"—(Molly's cheeks grew warm and her eyes soft and bright; it was such a

pleasure to hear his name)—"and I both agree that his mother knows much better how to manage the boy than his grandfather does. I suppose that was the one good thing she got from that hard-hearted mistress of hers. She certainly has been well trained in the management of children. And it makes her impatient, and annoyed, and unhappy, when she sees the squire giving the child nuts and ale, and all sorts of silly indulgences, and spoiling him in every possible way. Yet she's a coward, and doesn't speak out her mind. Now by being in lodgings, and having her own servants—nice pretty rooms they are, too; we went to see them, and Mrs. Jennings promises to attend well to Mrs. Osborne Hamley, and is very much honoured, and all that sort of thing—not ten minutes' walk from the Hall, too, so that she and the little chap may easily go backwards and forwards as often as they like, and yet she may keep the control over her child's discipline and diet. In short, I think I've done a good day's work," he continued, stretching himself a little; and then with a shake rousing himself, and making ready to go out again, to see a patient who had sent for him in his absence.

"A good day's work!" he repeated to himself as he ran downstairs. "I don't know when I have been so happy!" For he had not told Molly all that had passed between him and Roger. Roger had begun a fresh subject of conversation just as Mr. Gibson was hastening away from the Hall, after completing the new arrangement for Aimée and her child.

"You know that I set off next Tuesday, Mr. Gibson, don't you?" said Roger, a little abruptly.

"To be sure. I hope you'll be as successful in all your scientific objects as you were the last time, and have no sorrows awaiting you when you come back."

"Thank you. Yes. I hope so. You don't think there's any danger of infection now, do you?"

"No! If the disease were to spread through the household, I think we should have had some signs of it before now. One is never sure, remember, with scarlet fever."

Roger was silent for a minute or two. "Should you be afraid," he said at length, "of seeing me at your house?"

"Thank you; but I think I would rather decline the pleasure of your society there at present. It's only three weeks or a month since the child began. Besides, I

shall be over here again before you go. I'm always on my guard against symptoms of dropsy. I have known it supervene."

"Then I shall not see Molly again!" said Roger, in a tone and with a look of great disappointment.

Mr. Gibson turned his keen, observant eyes upon the young man, and looked at him in as penetrating a manner as if he had been beginning with an unknown illness. Then the doctor and the father compressed his lips and gave vent to a long intelligent whistle. "Whew!" said he.

Roger's bronzed cheeks took a deeper shade.

"You will take a message to her from me, won't you? A message of farewell?" he pleaded.

"Not I. I'm not going to be a message-carrier between any young man and young woman. I'll tell my womenkind I forbade you to come near the house, and that you're sorry to go away without bidding good-by. That's all I shall say."

"But you do not disapprove?—I see you guess why. Oh! Mr. Gibson, just speak to me one word of what must be in your heart, though you are pretending not to understand why I would give worlds to see Molly again before I go."

"My dear boy!" said Mr. Gibson, more affected than he liked to show, and laying his hand on Roger's shoulder. Then he pulled himself up, and said gravely enough:

"Mind, Molly is not Cynthia. If she were to care for you, she is not one who could transfer her love to the next comer."

"You mean not as readily as I have done," replied Roger. "I only wish you could know what a different feeling this is to my boyish love for Cynthia."

"I wasn't thinking of you when I spoke; but, however, as I might have remembered afterwards that you were not a model of constancy, let us hear what you have to say for yourself."

"Not much. I did love Cynthia very much. Her manners and her beauty bewitched me; but her letters,—short, hurried letters,—sometimes showing that she really hadn't taken the trouble to read mine through,—I cannot tell you the pain they gave me! Twelve months' solitude, in frequent danger of one's life—face to face with death—sometimes ages a man like many years' experience. Still I longed for the time when I should see her sweet face again, and hear her speak. Then the letter at the Cape!—and still I hoped. But you know how I found her, when I went to have

the interview which I trusted might end in the renewal of our relations,—engaged to Mr. Henderson. I saw her walking with him in your garden, coquetting with him about a flower, just as she used to do with me. I can see the pitying look in Molly's eyes as she watched me; I can see it now. And I could beat myself for being such a blind fool as to— What must she think of me? how she must despise me, choosing the false Duessa."

"Come, come! Cynthia isn't so bad as that. She's a very fascinating, faulty creature."

"I know! I know! I will never allow any one to say a word against her. If I called her the false Duessa it was because I wanted to express my sense of the difference between her and Molly as strongly as I could. You must allow for a lover's exaggeration. Besides, all I wanted to say was,—Do you think that Molly, after seeing and knowing that I had loved a person so inferior to herself, could ever be brought to listen to me?"

"I don't know. I can't tell. And even if I could, I would not. Only if it's any comfort to you, I may say what my experience has taught me. Women are queer, unreasoning creatures, and are just as likely as not to love a man who has been throwing away his affection."

"Thank you sir!" said Roger, interrupting him. "I see you mean to give me encouragement. And I had resolved never to give Molly a hint of what I felt till I returned,—and then to try and win her by every means in my power. I determined not to repeat the former scene in the former place,—in your drawing-room,—however I might be tempted. And perhaps, after all, she avoided me when she was here last."

"Now, Roger, I've listened to you long enough. If you've nothing better to do with your time than to talk about my daughter, I have. When you come back it will be time enough to enquire how far your father would approve of such an engagement."

"He himself urged it upon me the other day—but then I was in despair—I thought it was too late."

"And what means you are likely to have of maintaining a wife,—I always thought that point was passed too lightly over when you formed your hurried engagement to Cynthia. I'm not mercenary,—Molly has some money independently of me,—that she by the way knows nothing of,—not much;—and I can allow her something. But all these things must be left till your return."

"Then you sanction my attachment?"

"I don't know what you mean by sanctioning it. I can't help it. I suppose losing one's daughter is a necessary evil. Still" — seeing the disappointed expression on Roger's face — "it is but fair to you to say I'd rather give my child, — my only child, remember! — to you, than to any man in the world!"

"Thank you!" said Roger, shaking hands with Mr. Gibson, almost against the will of the latter. "And I may see her, just once, before I go?"

"Decidedly not. There I come in as doctor as well as father. No!"

"But you will take a message, at any rate?"

"To my wife and to her conjointly. I will not separate them. I will not in the slightest way be a go-between."

"Very well," said Roger. "Tell them both as strongly as you can how I regret your prohibition. I see I must submit. But if I don't come back, I'll haunt you for having been so cruel."

"Come, I like that. Give me a wise man of science in love! No one beats him in folly. Good-by."

"Good-by. You will see Molly this afternoon!"

"To be sure. And you will see your father. But I don't heave such portentous sighs at the thought."

Mr. Gibson gave Roger's message to his wife and to Molly that evening at dinner. It was but what the latter had expected, after all her father had said of the very great danger of infection; but now that her expectation came in the shape of a final decision, it took away her appetite. She submitted in silence; but her observant father noticed that after this speech of his, she only played with the food on her plate, and concealed a good deal of it under her knife and fork.

"*Lover versus father!*" thought he, half sadly. "*Lover wins.*" And he, too, became indifferent to all that remained of his dinner. Mrs. Gibson pattered on; and nobody listened.

The day of Roger's departure came. Molly tried hard to forget it in working away at a cushion she was preparing as a present to Cynthia; people did worsted-work in those days. One, two, three. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven; all wrong, she was thinking of something else, and had to unpick it. It was a rainy day, too; and Mrs. Gibson, who had planned to go out and pay some calls, had to stay indoors. This made her restless and fidgety. She kept going backwards and forwards to dif-

ferent windows in the drawing-room to look at the weather, as if she imagined that while it rained at one window, it might be fine weather at another. "Molly — come here! who is that man wrapped up in a cloak, — there, — near the Park wall, under the beech-tree — he has been there this half-hour and more, never stirring, and looking at this house all the time! I think it's very suspicious."

Molly looked, and in an instant recognized Roger under all his wraps. Her first instinct was to draw back. The next to come forwards, and say — "Why, mamma, it's Roger Hamley! Look now — he's kissing his hand; he wishing us good-by in the only way he can!" And she responded to his sign; but she was not sure if he perceived her modest quiet movement, for Mrs. Gibson became immediately so demonstrative that Molly fancied that her eager foolish pantomimic motions must absorb all his attention.

"I call this so attentive of him," said Mrs. Gibson, in the midst of a volley of kisses of her hand. "Really it is quite romantic. It reminds me of former days — but he will be too late! I must send him away; it is half-past twelve!" And she took out her watch and held it up, tapping it with her fore-finger, and occupying the very centre of the window. Molly could only peep here and there, dodging now up, now down, now on this side, now on that of the perpetually-moving arms. She fancied she saw something of a corresponding movement on Roger's part. At length he went away, slowly, slowly, and often looking back, in spite of the tapped watch. Mrs. Gibson at last retreated, and Molly quietly moved into her place to see his figure once more before the turn of the road hid it from her view. He, too, knew where the last glimpse of Mr. Gibson's house was to be obtained, and once more he turned, and his white handkerchief floated in the air. Molly waved hers high up, with eager longing that it should be seen. And then, he was gone! and Molly returned to her worsted-work, happy, glowing, sad, content, and thinking to herself how sweet is friendship!

When she came to a sense of the present, Mrs. Gibson was saying, —

"Upon my word, though Roger Hamley has never been a great favourite of mine, this little attention of his has reminded me very forcibly of a very charming young man — a *soupirant*, as the French would call him — Lieutenant Harper — you must have heard me speak of him, Molly?"

"I think I have!" said Molly, absently.

"Well, you remember how devoted he was to me when I was at Mrs. Duncombe's, my first situation, and I only seventeen. And when the recruiting party was ordered to another town, poor Mr. Harper came and stood opposite the schoolroom window for nearly an hour, and I know it was his doing that the band played 'The girl I left behind me,' when they marched out the next day. Poor Mr. Harper! It was before I knew dear Mr. Kirkpatrick! Dear me. How often my poor heart has had to bleed in this life of mine! not but what dear papa is a very worthy man, and makes me very happy. He would spoil me, indeed, if I would let him. Still he is not as rich as Mr. Henderson."

That last sentence contained the germ of Mrs. Gibson's present grievance. Having married Cynthia, as her mother put it — taking credit to herself as if she had had the principal part in the achievement — she now became a little envious of her daughter's good fortune in being the wife of a young, handsome, rich, and moderately fashionable man, who lived in London. She naively expressed her feelings on this subject to her husband one day when she was really not feeling quite well, and when consequently her annoyances were much more present to her mind than her sources of happiness.

"It is such a pity!" said she, "that I was born when I was. I should so have liked to belong to this generation."

"That's sometimes my own feeling" said he. "So many new views seem to be opened in science, that I should like, if it were possible, to live till their reality was ascertained, and one saw what they led to. But I don't suppose that's your reason, my dear, for wishing to be twenty or thirty years younger."

"No, indeed. And I did not put it in that hard unpleasant way; I only said I should like to belong to this generation. To tell the truth, I was thinking of Cynthia. Without vanity, I believe I was as pretty as she is — when I was a girl, I mean; I had not her dark eye-lashes, but then my nose was straighter. And now look at the difference! I have to live in a little country town with three servants, and no carriage; and she with her inferior good looks will live in Sussex Place, and keep a man and a brougham, and I don't know what. But the fact is, in this generation there are so many more rich young men than there were when I was a girl."

"Oh, oh! so that's your reason, is it, my dear. If you had been young now you

might have married somebody as well off as Walter?"

"Yes!" said she. "I think that was my idea. Of course I should have liked him to be you. I always think if you had gone to the bar you might have succeeded better, and lived in London, too. I don't think Cynthia cares much where she lives, yet you see it has come to her."

"What has — London?"

"Oh, you dear, facetious man. Now that's just the thing to have captivated a jury. I don't believe Walter will ever be so clever as you are. Yet he can take Cynthia to Paris, and abroad, and everywhere. I only hope all this indulgence won't develop the faults in Cynthia's character. It's a week since we heard from her, and I did write so particularly to ask her for the autumn fashions before I bought my new bonnet. But riches are a great snare."

"Be thankful you are spared temptation, my dear."

"No, I'm not. Everybody likes to be tempted. And, after all, it's very easy to resist temptation, if one wishes."

"I don't find it so easy," said her husband.

"Here's medicine for you, mamma," said Molly, entering with a letter held up in her hand. "A letter from Cynthia."

"Oh, you dear little messenger of good news! There was one of the heathen deities in Mangnall's questions whose office it was to bring news. The letter is dated from Calais. They're coming home! She's bought me a shawl and a bonnet! The dear creature! Always thinking of others before herself: good fortune cannot spoil her. They've a fortnight left of their holiday! Their house is not quite ready; they're coming here. Oh, now, Mr. Gibson, we must have the new dinner service at Wat's! I've set my heart on so long! 'Home' Cynthia calls this house. I'm sure it has been a home to her, poor darling! I doubt if there is another man in the world who would have treated his stepdaughter like dear papa! And, Molly, you must have a new gown."

"Come, come! Remember I belong to the last generation," said Mr. Gibson.

"And Cynthia will not notice what I wear," said Molly, bright with pleasure at the thought of seeing her again.

"No! but Walter will. He has such a quick eye for dress, and I think I rival papa; if he is a good stepfather, I'm a good stepmother, and I could not bear to see my Molly shabby, and not looking her best. I

must have a new gown too. It won't do to look as if we had nothing but the dresses which we wore at the wedding!"

But Molly stood against the new gown for herself, and urged that if Cynthia and Walter were to come to visit them often, they had better see them as they really were, in dress, habits, and appointments. When Mr. Gibson had left the room, Mrs. Gibson softly reproached Molly for her obstinacy.

"You might have allowed me to beg for a new gown for you, Molly, when you knew how much I admired that figured silk at Brown's the other day. And now, of course, I can't be so selfish as to get it for myself, and you to have nothing. You should learn to understand the wishes of other people. Still, on the whole, you are a dear, sweet girl, and I only wish — well, I know what I wish; only dear papa does not like it to be talked about. And now cover me up close, and let me go to sleep, and dream about my dear Cynthia and my new shawl!"

HERE the story is broken off and it can never be finished. What promised to be the crowning work of a life is a memorial of death. A few days longer, and it would have been a triumphal column, crowned with a capital of festal leaves and flowers: now it is another sort of column — one of those sad white pillars which stand broken in the churchyard.

But if the work is not quite complete, little remains to be added to it, and that little has been distinctly reflected into our minds. We know that Roger Hamley will marry Molly, and that is what we are most concerned about. Indeed, there was little else to tell. Had the writer lived, she would have sent her hero back to Africa forthwith; and those scientific parts of Africa are a long way from Hamley; and there is not much to choose between a long distance and a long time. How many hours are there in twenty-four when you are all alone in a desert place, a thousand miles from the happiness which might be yours to take — if you were there to take it? How many, when from the sources of the Topinambo your heart flies back ten times a day, like a carrier-pigeon, to the one only source of future good for you, and ten times a day returns with its message undelivered? Many more than are counted on the calendar. So Roger found. The days were weeks that separated him from the time when Molly gave him a certain little flower, and months from the time which divorced

him from Cynthia, whom he had begun to doubt before he knew for certain that she was never much worth hoping for. And if such were his days, what was the slow procession of actual weeks and months in those remote and solitary places? They were like years of a stay-at-home life, with liberty and leisure to see that nobody was courting Molly meanwhile. The effect of this was, that long before the term of his engagement was ended all that Cynthia had been to him was departed from Roger's mind, and all that Molly was and might be to him filled it full.

He returned; but when he saw Molly again he remembered that to her the time of his absence might not have seemed so long, and was oppressed with the old dread that she would think him fickle. Therefore this young gentleman, so self-reliant and so lucid in scientific matters, found it difficult after all to tell Molly how much he hoped she loved him; and might have blundered if he had not thought of beginning by showing her the flower that was plucked from the nosegay. How charmingly that scene would have been drawn, had Mrs. Gaskell lived to depict it, we can only imagine: that it *would* have been charming — especially in what Molly did, and looked, and said — we know.

Roger and Molly are married; and if one of them is happier than the other, it is Molly. Her husband has no need to draw upon the little fortune which is to go to poor Osborne's boy, for he becomes professor at some great scientific institution, and wins his way in the world handsomely. The squire is almost as happy in this marriage as his son. If any one suffers for it, it is Mr. Gibson. But he takes a partner, so as to get a chance of running up to London to stay with Molly for a few days now and then, and "to get a little rest from Mrs. Gibson." Of what was to happen to Cynthia after her marriage the author was not heard to say much, and, indeed, it does not seem that anything needs to be added. One little anecdote, however, was told of her by Mrs. Gaskell, which is very characteristic. One day, when Cynthia and her husband were on a visit to Hamley, Mr. Henderson learned for the first time, through an innocent casual remark of Mr. Gibson's, that the famous traveller, Roger Hamley, was known to the family. Cynthia had never happened to mention it. How well that little incident, too, would have been described!

But it is useless to speculate upon what would have been done by the delicate strong

hand which can create no more Molly Gibsons — no more Roger Hamleys. We have repeated, in this brief note, all that is known of her designs for the story, which would have been completed in another chapter. There is not so much to regret, then, so far as this novel is concerned; indeed, the regrets of those who knew her are less for the loss of the novelist than of the woman — one of the kindest and wisest of her time. But yet, for her own sake as a novelist alone, her untimely death is a matter for deep regret. It is clear in this novel of *Wives and Daughters*, in the exquisite little story that preceded it, *Cousin Phillis*, and in *Sylvia's Lovers*, that Mrs. Gaskell had within these five years started upon a new career with all the freshness of youth, and with a mind which seemed to have put off its clay and to have been born again. But that "put off its clay" must be taken in a very narrow sense. All minds are tintured more or less with the "muddy vesture" in which they are contained; but few minds ever showed less of base earth than Mrs. Gaskell's. It was so at all times; but lately even the original slight tincture seemed to disappear. While you read any one of the last three books we have named, you feel yourself caught out of an abominable wicked world, crawling with selfishness and reeking with base passions, into one where there is much weakness, many mistakes, sufferings long and bitter, but where it is possible for people to live calm and wholesome lives; and, what is more, you feel that this is at least as real a world as the other. The kindly spirit which thinks no ill looks out of her pages irradiate; and while we read them, we breathe the purer intelligence which prefers to deal with emotions and passions which have a living root in minds within the pale of salvation, and not with those which rot without it. This spirit is more especially declared in *Cousin Phillis* and *Wives and Daughters* — their author's latest works; they seem to show that for her the end of life was not descent amongst the clods of the valley, but ascent into the purer air of the heaven-aspiring hills.

We are saying nothing now of the merely intellectual qualities displayed in these later works. Twenty years to come, that may be thought the more important question of the two; in the presence of her grave we cannot think so; but it is true, all the same, that as mere works of art and observation, these later novels of Mrs. Gaskell's are among the finest of our time. There is a scene in *Cousin Phillis* — where Holman, making hay with his men, ends the day with

a psalm — which is not excelled as a picture in all modern fiction; and the same may be said of that chapter of this last story in which Roger smokes a pipe with the Squire after the quarrel with Osborne. There is little in either of these scenes, or in a score of others which succeed each other like gems in a cabinet, which the ordinary novel-maker could "seize." There is no "material" for him in half-a-dozen farming men singing hymns in a field, or a discontented old gentleman smoking tobacco with his son. Still less could he avail himself of the miseries of a little girl sent to be happy in a fine house full of fine people; but it is just in such things as these that true genius appears brightest and most unapproachable. It is the same with the personages in Mrs. Gaskell's works. Cynthia is one of the most difficult characters which have ever been attempted in our time. Perfect art always obscures the difficulties it overcomes; and it is not till we try to follow the processes by which such a character as the Tito of *Romola* is created, for instance, that we begin to understand what a marvellous piece of work it is. To be sure, Cynthia was not so difficult, nor is it nearly so great a creation as that splendid achievement of art and thought — of the rarest art, of the profoundest thought. But she also belongs to the kind of characters which are conceived only in minds large, clear, harmonious and just, and which can be portrayed fully and without flaw only by hands obedient to the finest motions of the mind. Viewed in this light, Cynthia is a more important piece of work even than Molly, delicately as she is drawn, and true and harmonious as that picture is also. And what we have said of Cynthia may be said with equal truth of Osborne Hamley. The true delineation of a character like that is as fine a test of art as the painting of a foot or a hand, which also seems so easy, and in which perfection is most rare. In this case the work is perfect. Mrs. Gaskell has drawn a dozen characters more striking than Osborne since she wrote *Mary Barton*, but not one which shows more exquisite finish.

Another thing we may be permitted to notice, because it has a great and general significance. It may be true that this is not exactly the place for criticism, but since we are writing of Osborne Hamley, we cannot resist pointing out a peculiar instance of the subtler conceptions which underlie all really considerable works. Here are Osborne and Roger, two men who, in every particular that can be seized for description, are totally different creatures. Body and

mind they are quite unlike. They have different tastes; they take different ways: they are men of two sorts, which, in the society sense, never "know" each other; and yet, never did brotherly blood run more manifest than in the veins of those two. To make that manifest without allowing the effort to peep out for a single moment, would be a triumph of art; but it is a "touch beyond the reach of art" to make their likeness in unlikeness so natural a thing that we no more wonder about it than we wonder at seeing the fruit and the bloom on the same bramble: we have always seen them there together in blackberry season, and do not wonder about it nor think about it at all. Inferior writers, even some writers who are highly accounted, would have revelled in the "contrast," persuaded that they were doing a fine anatomical dramatic thing by bringing it out at every opportunity. To the author of *Wives and Daughters* this sort of anatomy was mere dislocation. She began by having the people of her story born in the usual way, and not built up like the Frankenstein monster; and thus when Squire Hamley took a wife, it was then

provided that his two boys should be as naturally one and diverse as the fruit and the bloom on the bramble. "It goes without speaking." These differences are precisely what might have been expected from the union of Squire Hamley with the town-bred, refined, delicate-minded woman whom he married; and the affection of the young men, their kindness (to use the word in its old and new meanings at once) is nothing but a reproduction of those impalpable threads of love which bound the equally diverse father and mother in bonds faster than the ties of blood.

But we will not permit ourselves to write any more in this vein. It is unnecessary to demonstrate to those who know what is and what is not true literature that Mrs. Gaskell was gifted with some of the choicest faculties bestowed upon mankind; that these grew into greater strength and ripened into greater beauty in the decline of her days; and that she has gifted us with some of the truest, purest works of fiction in the language. And she was herself what her works show her to have been — a wise, good woman. — [Ed. Cornhill Magazine.]

THE TRUE GOLDEN AGE.

CHILDHOOD's the only golden age;

Then had I many a fairy vassal,

Then even the miser who lived on the hill
Was Giant Despair, of Doubting Castle.

Everything my fancy changed

To the wonderful dreams of nursery-lore,

And I walk'd in the fir tree wood in fear
Of meeting the Giant Blunderbore.

I dreaded the cat with the brassy eyes

Glaring with phosphorescent lights;

For I knew on such steeds the witches ride,
Chasing the moon on the summer nights.

And well I knew that the fern-leaves hid

Sleeping fairies and elves by dozens,

And mushrooms sprang wherever there danced
Titania's chiefs or Oberon's cousins.

The sunset brought me faces grim,
Glaring out from the fiery doors;
And often I saw in the moonlit clouds
Angels who paced the starry floors.

Now, the rainbow itself seems black;

The only giant I meet is Care;
The wolf is growling outside the door,
And the bailiff's step I hear on the stair.

Childhood's the only golden age;

Then had I many a fairy vassal,
Then even the miser who lived on the hill
Was Giant Despair, of Doubting Castle.

— All the Year Round.

PART VIII.—CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE NEST WITH STRANGE "BIRDS" IN IT.

To the Swan's Nest, very differently tenanted from what we saw it at the opening of our story, we have now to conduct our reader. Its present occupant, "the acquisition to any neighbourhood," as the house-agent styled him, was Colonel Sewell.

Lady Lendrick had taken the place for her son, on finding that Sir William would not extend his hospitality to him. She had taken the precaution not merely to pay a year's rent in advance, but to make a number of changes in the house and its dependencies, which she hoped might render the residence more palatable to him, and reconcile him in some degree to its isolation and retirement.

The Colonel was, however, one of those men—they are numerous enough in this world—who canvass the mouth of the gift-horse, and have few scruples in detecting the signs of his age. He criticised the whole place with a most commendable frankness. It was a "poky little hole. It was dark, it was low ceilinged. It was full of inconveniences. The furniture was old-fashioned. You had to mount two steps into the drawing-room, and go down three into the dining-room. He had to cross a corridor to his bath-room, and there was a great Tudor window in the small breakfast parlour, and made one feel as if sitting in a lantern."

As for the stables, "he wouldn't put a donkey into them." No light, no ventilation, no anything, in short. To live surrounded with so many inconveniences was the most complete assertion of his fallen condition, and, as he said, "he had never realized his fall in the world till he settled down in that miserable Nest."

There are men whose especial delight it is to call your attention to their impaired condition, their threadbare coat, their patched shoes, their shabby equipage, or their sorry dwelling, as though they were framing a sort of indictment against Fate and setting forth the hardships of persons of merit like them being subjected to this unjustifiable treatment by Fortune.

"I suppose you never thought to see me reduced to this," is the burden of their song; and it is very strange how, by mere repetition and insistence, these people establish for themselves a sort of position, and oblige the world to yield them a black-mail of respect and condolence.

"This was not the sort of tippie I used to

set before you once on a time, old fellow," will be uttered by one of whose hospitalities you have never partaken. "It was another guess sort of beast I gave you for a mount when we met last," will be said by a man who never rose above a cob pony; and one is obliged to yield a kind of polite assent to such balderdash, or stand forward as a public prosecutor and arraign the rascal for a humbug.

In this self-commiseration Sewell was a master, and there was not a corner of the house he did not make the but of his ridicule—to contrast its littleness and vulgarity with the former ways and belongings of his own once splendour.

"You're capital fellows," said he to a party of officers from the neighbouring garrison, "to come and see me in this dog-hole. Try and find a chair you can sit on, and I'll ask my wife if we can give you some dinner. You remember me up at Rangoon, Hobbes? another guess sort of place, wasn't it? I had the Rajah's palace and four elephants at my orders. At Guzerat too I was the Resident, and by Jove I never dreamed of coming down to this!"

Too indolent or too indifferent to care where or how she was lodged, his wife gave no heed to his complaints, beyond a little half-supercilious smile as he uttered them. "If a fellow will marry, however, he deserves it all," was his usual wind-up to all his lamentations; and in this he seemed to console himself by the double opportunity of pitying himself and insulting his wife.

All that Colonel Cave and his officers could say in praise of the spot, its beauty, its neatness, and its comfort, were only fresh alimony to his depreciation, and he more than half implied that possibly the place was quite good enough for *them*, but that was not exactly the question at issue.

Some men go through life permitted to say scores of things for which their neighbour would be irrevocably cut and excluded from society. Either that the world is amused at their bitterness, or that it is regarded as a malady, far worse to him who bears than to him who witnesses it—whatever the reason—people endure these men, and make even a sort of vicious pets of them. Sewell was of this order, and a fine specimen too.

All the men around him were his equals in every respect, and yet there was not one of them who did not accept a position of quiet, unresisting inferiority to him for the sake of his bad temper and his bad tongue. It was "his way," they said, and they bore it.

He was a consummate adept in all the details of a household; and his dinners were perfection, his wine good, and his servants drilled to the very acme of discipline. These were not mean accessories to any pretension; and as they sat over their claret, a pleasanter and more social tone succeeded than the complaining spirit of their host had at first promised.

The talk was chiefly professional. Pipe-clay will ever assert its pre-eminence, and with reason; for it is a grand leveller; and Smooks, who joined three months ago, may have the Army List as well by heart as the oldest major in the service; and so they discussed, Where was Hobson? what made Jobson sell out? how did Bobson get out of that scrape with the paymaster? and how long will Dobson be able to live at his present rate in that light cavalry corps? Everything that fell from them showed the most thorough intimacy with the condition, the fortune, and the prospects of the men they discussed — familiarity there was enough of, but no friendship. No one seemed to trouble himself whether the sick-leave or the sell-out meant hopeless calamity — all were dashed with a species of well-bread fatalism that was astonished with nothing, rejoiced at nothing, repined at nothing.

"I wish Trafford would make up his mind!" cried one. "Three weeks ago he told me positively he would leave, and now I hear he offered Craycroft three thousand pounds to retire from the majority."

"That's true; Craycroft told me so himself; but old Joe is a wily bird, and he'll not be taken so easily."

"He's an eldest son now," broke in another. "What does he care whether he be called major or captain?"

"An eldest son!" cried Sewell, suddenly; "how is that? When I met him at the Cape he spoke of an elder brother."

"So he had then, but he's 'off the hooks.'"

"I don't think it matters much," said the Colonel. "The bulk of the property is disentailed, and Sir Hugh can leave it how he likes."

"That's what I call downright shameful," said one; but he was the minority, for a number of voices exclaimed —

"And perfectly right; that law of primogeniture is a positive barbarism."

While the dispute waxed warm and noisy, Sewell questioned the Colonel closely about Trafford — how it happened that the entail was removed, and why there was reason to suppose that Sir Hugh and his son were not on terms of friendship.

Cave was frank enough when he spoke of the amount of the fortune and the extent of the estate, but used a careful caution in speaking of family matters, merely hinting that Trafford had gone very fast, spent a deal of money, had his debts twice paid by his father, and was now rather in the position of a reformed spendthrift, making a good character for prudence and economy.

"And where is he? — not in Ireland?" asked Sewell, eagerly.

"No; he is to join on Monday. I got a hurried note from him this morning, dated Holyhead. You said you had met him?"

"Yes, at the Cape; he used to come and dine with us there occasionally."

"Did you like him?"

"In a way. Yes, I think he was a nice fellow — that is, he might be made a nice fellow, but it was always a question into what hands he fell; he was at the same time pliant and obstinate. He would always imitate — he would never lead. So he seemed to me; but, to tell you the truth, I left him a good deal to the women; he was too young and too fresh for a man like myself."

"You are rather hard on him," said Cave, laughing; "but you are partly right. He has, however, fine qualities — he is generous and trustful to any extent."

"Indeed!" said Sewell, carelessly, as he bit off the end of a cigar.

"Nothing would make him swerve from his word; and if placed in a difficulty where a friend was involved, his own interests would be the last he'd think of."

"Very fine, all that. Are you drinking claret? — if so, finish that decanter, and let's have a fresh bottle."

Cave declined to take more wine, and he arose, with the rest, to repair to the drawing-room for coffee.

It was not very usual for Sewell to approach his wife or notice her in society; now, however, he drew a chair near her as she sat at the fire, and, in a low whisper, said — "I have some pleasant news for you."

"Indeed!" she said, coldly — "what a strange incident."

"You mean it is a strange channel for pleasant news to come through, perhaps," said he, with a curl of his lip.

"Possibly that is what I meant," said she, as quietly as before.

"None of these fine-lady airs with me, madam," said he, reddening with anger; "there are no two people in Europe ought to understand each other better than we do."

"In that I quite agree with you."

"And as such is the case, affectations are clean thrown away, madam; we *can* have no disguises for each other."

A very slight inclination of her head seemed to assent to this remark, but she did not speak.

"We came to plain speaking many a day ago," said he, with increased bitterness in his tone. "I don't see why we are to forego the advantage of it now — do you?"

"By no means. Speak as plainly as you wish; I am quite ready to hear you."

"You have managed, however, to make people observe us," muttered he between his teeth — "it's an old trick of yours, madam. You can play martyr at the shortest notice." He rose hastily and moved to another part of the room, where a very noisy group were arranging a party for pool at billiards.

"Won't you have me?" cried Sewell in his ordinary tone. "I'm a perfect boon at pool; for I'm the most unlucky dog in everything."

"I scarcely think you'll expect us to believe *that*," said Cave, with a glance of unmistakable admiration towards Mrs. Sewell.

"Ay," cried Sewell, fiercely, and answering the unspoken sentiment — "ay, sir, and *that*" — he laid a stern emphasis on the word — "and *that* the worst luck of all."

"I've been asking Mrs. Sewell to play a game with us, and she says she has no objection," said a young subaltern, "if Colonel Sewell does not dislike it."

"I'll play whist then," said Sewell. "Who'll make a rubber? — Cave, will you? Here's Houghton and Mowbray — eh!"

"No, no," said Mowbray — "you are all too good for me."

"How I hate that — too good for *me*," said Sewell. "Why, man, what better investment could you ask for your money than the benefit of good teaching? Always ride with the best hounds — play with the best players — talk with the best talkers."

"And make love to the prettiest women," added Cave, in a whisper, as Mowbray followed Mrs. Sewell into the billiard-room.

"I heard you, Cave," whispered Sewell, in a still lower whisper; "there's devilish little escapes *my* ears, I promise you." The bustle and preparation of the card-table served in part to cover Cave's confusion, but his cheek tingled and his hand shook with mingled shame and annoyance.

Sewell saw it all, and knew how to profit by it. He liked high play, to which Cave generally objected; but he well knew that on the present occasion Cave would concur

in anything to cover his momentary sense of shame.

"Pounds and fives, I suppose," said Sewell; and the others bowed, and the game began.

As little did Cave like three-handed whist, but he was in no mood to oppose anything; for, like many men who have made an awkward speech, he exaggerated the meaning through his fears, and made it appear absolutely monstrous to himself.

"Whatever you like," was therefore his remark; and he sat down to the game.

Sewell was a skilled player; but the race is no more to the swift in cards than in anything else — he lost, and lost heavily. He undervalued his adversaries too, and, in consequence, he followed up his bad luck by increased wagers. Cave tried to moderate the ardour he displayed, and even remonstrated with him on the sums they were staking, which, he good-humouredly remarked, were far above his own pretensions; but Sewell resented the advice, and replied with a coarse insinuation about winners' counsels. The ill luck continued, and Sewell's peevishness and ill temper increased with every game. "What have I lost to you?" cried he, abruptly, to Cave; "it jars on my nerves every time you take out that cursed memorandum, so that all I can do is not to fling it into the fire."

"I'm sure I wish you would, or that you would let me do it," said Cave, quietly.

"How much is it? — not short of three hundred, I'll be bound."

"It is upwards of five hundred," said Cave, handing the book across the table.

"You'll have to wait for it, I promise you. You must give me time, for I'm in all sorts of messes just now." While Cave assured him that there was no question of pressing for payment — to take his own perfect convenience — Sewell, not heeding him, went on, "This confounded place has cost me a pot of money. My wife, too, knows how to scatter her five-pound notes; in short, we are a wasteful lot. Shall we have one rubber more, eh?"

"As you like. I am at your orders."

"Let us say double or quits, then, for the whole sum."

Cave made no reply, and seemed not to know how to answer.

"Of course if you object," said Sewell, pushing back his chair from the table, as though about to rise, "there's no more to be said."

"What do *you* say, Houghton?" asked Cave.

"Houghton has nothing to say to it; *he*

hasn't won twenty pounds from me," said Sewell, fiercely.

"Whatever you like, then," said Cave, in a tone in which it was easy to see irritation was with difficulty kept under, and the game began.

The game began in deep silence. The restrained temper of the players and the heavy sum together impressed them, and not a word was dropped. The cards fell upon the table with a clear, sharp sound, and the clink of the counters resounded through the room, the only noises there.

As they played, the company from the billiard-room poured in and drew around the whist-table, at first noisily enough; but seeing the deep preoccupation of the players, their steadfast looks, their intense eagerness, made more striking by their silence, they gradually lowered their voices, and at last only spoke in whispers, and rarely.

The first game of the rubber had been contested trick by trick, but ended by Cave winning it. The second game was won by Sewell, and the third opened with his deal.

As he dealt the cards, a murmur ran through the bystanders that the stake was something considerable, and the interest increased in consequence. A few trifling bets were laid on the issue, and one of the group, in a voice slightly raised above the rest, said, "I'll back Sewell for a pony."

"I beg you will not, sir," said Sewell, turning fiercely round. "I'm in bad luck already, and I don't want to be swamped altogether. There, sir, your interference has made me misdeal," cried he, passionately, as he flung the cards on the table.

Not a word was said as Cave began his deal. It was too plain to every one that Sewell's temper was becoming beyond control, and that a word or a look might bring the gravest consequences.

"What cards!" said Cave, as he spread his hand on the table: "four honours, and nine trumps."

Sewell stared at them, moved his fingers through them to separate and examine them, and then, turning his head round, he looked behind. It was his wife was standing at the back of his chair, calm, pale, and collected. "By Heaven!" cried he, savagely, "I knew who was there as well as if I saw her. The moment Cave spread out his cards, I'd have taken my oath that *she* was standing over me."

She moved hastily away at the ruffianly speech, and a low murmur of indignant anger filled the room. Cave and Houghton

quitted the table, and mingled with the others; but Sewell sat still, tearing up the cards one by one, with a quiet, methodical persistence that betrayed no passion. "There!" said he, as he threw the last fragment from him, "you shall never bring good or bad luck to any one more." With the ease of one to whom such paroxysms were not unfrequent, he joined in the conversation of a group of young men, and with a familiar jocularly soon set them at their ease towards him; and then, drawing his arm within Cave's, he led him apart, and said, "I'll go over to the Barrack to-morrow and breakfast with you. I have just thought of how I can settle this little debt."

"Oh, don't distress yourself about that," said Cave. "I beg you will not let it give you a moment's uneasiness."

"Good fellow!" said Sewell, clapping him on the shoulder; "but I have the means of doing it without inconvenience, as I'll show you to-morrow. Don't go yet; don't let your fellows go. We are going to have a broil, or a devilled biscuit, or something." He walked over and rang the bell, and then hastily passed on into a smaller room, where his wife was sitting on a sofa, an old doctor of the regiment seated at her side.

"I won't interrupt the consultation," said Sewell, "but I have just one word to say." He leaned over the back of the sofa, and whispered in her ear, "Your friend Trafford is become an eldest son. He is at the Bilton Hotel, Dublin; write and ask him here. Say I have some cock-shooting—there are harriers in the neighborhood. Are you listening to me, madam?" said he, in a harsh, hissing voice, for she had half turned away her head, and her face had assumed an expression of sickened disgust. She nodded, but did not speak. "Tell him that I've spoken to Cave—he'll make his leave all right—that I'll do my best to make the place pleasant to him, and that—in fact, I needn't try to teach you to write a sweet note. You understand me, eh?"

"Oh, perfectly," said she, rising, and a livid paleness now spread over her face, and even her lips were bloodless.

"I was too abrupt with my news. I ought to have been more considerate; I ought to have known it might overcome you," said he, with a sneering bitterness. "Doctor, you'll have to give Mrs. Sewell some cordial, some restorative—that's the name for it. She was overcome by some tidings I brought her. Even pleasant news will startle us occasionally. As the French

comedy has it, 'La joie fait peur,' and with a listless, easy air he sauntered away into another room.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SEWELL VISITS CAVE.

PUNCTUAL to his appointment, Sewell appeared at breakfast the next morning with Colonel Cave. Of all the ill humour and bad conduct of the night before, not a trace now was to be seen. He was easy, courteous, and affable. He even made a half-jesting apology for his late display of bad temper; attributing it to an attack of coming gout. "So long as the malady," said he, "is in a state of menace, one's nerves become so fine strung, that there is no name for the irritability; but when once a good honest seizure has taken place, a man recovers himself, and stands up to his suffering manfully and well.

"To-day, for instance," said he, pointing to a shoe divided by long incisions, "I have got my enemy fixed, and I let him do his worst."

The breakfast proceeded pleasantly; Cave was in admiration of his guest's agreeability; for he talked away, not so much of things, as of people. He had, in a high degree, that man-of-the-world gift of knowing something about every one. No name could turn up of which he could not tell you something the owner of it had said or done, and these "scratch" biographies are often very amusing, particularly when struck off with the readiness of a practised talker.

It was not, then, merely that Sewell obliterated every memory of the evening before, but he made Cave forget the actual object for which he had come that morning. Projects, besides, for future pleasure did Sewell throw out, like a man who had both the leisure, the means, and the taste for enjoyment. There was some capital shooting he had just taken; his neighbour, an old squire, had never cared for it, and let him have it "for a song." They were going to get up hack races too, in the Park — "half-a-dozen hurdles and a double ditch to tumble over," as he said, "will amuse our garrison fellows — and my wife has some theatrical intentions — if you will condescend to help her."

Sewell talked with that blended munificence and shiftness which seems a specialty with a certain order of men. Nothing was too costly to be done, and yet everything must be accomplished with a dexterity that

was almost a dodge. The men of this gift are great scene-painters. They dash you off a view — be it a wood or a rich interior, a terraced garden or an Alpine hut — in a few loose touches. Ay, and they "smudge" them out again before criticism has had time to deal with them. "By the way," cried he, suddenly, stopping in the full swing of some description of a possible regatta, "I was half forgetting what brought me here this morning. I am in your debt, Cave."

He stopped as though his speech needed some rejoinder, and Cave grew very red and very uneasy — tried to say something — any thing — but could not. The fact was, that, like a man who had never in all his life adventured on high play or risked a stake that could possibly be of importance to him, he felt pretty much the same amount of distress at having won as he would have felt at having lost. He well knew that if by any mischance he had incurred such a loss as a thousand pounds, it would have been a most serious embarrassment — by what right, then, had he won it? Now, although feelings of this sort were about the very last to find entrance into Sewell's heart, he well knew that there were men who were liable to them, just as there were people who were disposed to plague or yellow fever, and other maladies from which he lived remote. It was, then, with a sort of selfish motive that he saw Cave's awkward hesitating manner, and read the marks of the shame that was overwhelming him."

"A heavy sum too," said Sewell, jauntily; "we went the whole 'pot' on that last rubber."

"I wish I could forget it — I mean," muttered Cave, "I wish we could both forget it."

"I have not the least objection to that," said Sewell, gayly; "only let it first be paid."

"Well, but — what I mean was — what I wanted to say, or rather, what I hoped — was — in plain words, Sewell," burst he out, like a man to whom desperation gave courage, — "in plain words, I never intended to play such stakes as we played last night — I never have — I never will again."

"Not to give me my revenge?" said Sewell, laughing.

"No, not for anything. I don't know what I'd have done — I don't know what would have become of me, if I had lost; and I pledge you my honour, I think the next worst thing is to have won."

"Do you, by George!"

"I do, upon my sacred word of honour. My first thoughts on waking this morning

were more wretched than they have been for any day in the last twenty years of life, for I was thoroughly ashamed of myself."

"You'll not find many men afflicted with your malady, Cave; and, at all events, it's not contagious."

"I know nothing about that," said Cave, half irritably; "I never was a play man, and have little pretension to understand their feelings."

"They haven't got any," said Sewell, as he lit his cigar.

"Perhaps not; so much the worse for them. I can only say, if the misery of losing be only proportionate to the shame of winning, I don't envy a gambler; such an example, too, to exhibit to my young officers. It was too bad — too bad."

"I declare I don't understand this," said Sewell, carelessly; "when I commanded a battalion, I never imagined I was obliged to be a model to the subs or the junior captains." The tone of banter went, this time, to the quick, and Cave flushed a deep crimson, and said,

"I'm not sorry that my ideas of my duty are different; though, in the present case, I have failed to fulfil it."

"Well, well, there's nothing to grow angry about," said Sewell, laughing, "even though you won't give me my revenge. My present business is to book up," and, as he spoke, he sat down at the table, and drew a roll of papers from his pocket, and laid it before him.

"You distress me greatly by all this, Sewell," said Cave, whose agitation now almost overcame him. "Cannot we hit upon some way? can't we let it lie over? I mean — is there no arrangement by which this cursed affair can be deferred; you understand me?"

"Not in the least. Such things are never deferred without loss of honour to the man in default. The stake that a man risks is supposed to be in his pocket, otherwise play becomes trade, and accepts all the vicissitudes of trade."

"It's the first time I ever heard them contrasted to the disparagement of honest industry."

"And I call billiards, tennis, whist, ecarté, honest industries too, though I won't call them trades. There, there," said he, laughing at the other's look of displeasure, "don't be afraid; I am not going to preach these doctrines to your young officers, for whose morals you are so much concerned. Sit down here, and just listen to me for one moment."

Cave obeyed, but his face showed in every feature how reluctantly.

"I see, Cave," said Sewell, with a quiet smile — "I see you want to do me a favour — so you shall. I am obliged to own that I am an exception to the theory I have just now enunciated. I staked a thousand pounds, and I had *not* the money in my pocket. Wait a moment — don't interrupt me. I had not the money in gold or bank notes, but I had it here" — and he touched the papers before him — "in a form equally solvent, only that it required that he who won the money should be not a mere acquaintance, but a friend — a friend to whom I could speak with freedom and in confidence. This," said he, "is a bond for twelve hundred pounds, given by my wife's guardian in satisfaction of a loan once made to him; he was a man of large fortune, which he squandered away recklessly, leaving but a small estate, which he could neither sell nor alienate. Upon this property this is a mortgage. As an old friend of my father-in-law — a very unworthy one, by the way — I could not of course press him for the interest, and, as you will see, it has never been paid; and there is now a balance of some hundred pounds additional against him. Of this I could not speak, for another reason — we are not without the hope of inheriting something by him — and to allude to this matter would be ruinous. Keep this, then. I insist upon it. I declare to you, if you refuse, I will sell it tomorrow to the first money-lender I can find, and send you my debt in hard cash. I've been a play man all my life, but never a defaulter."

There was a tone of proud indignation in the way he spoke that awed Cave to silence; for in good truth he was treating of themes of which he knew nothing whatever: and of the sort of influences which swayed gamblers, of the rules that guided, and the conventionalities that bound them, he was profoundly ignorant.

"You'll not get your money, Cave," resumed Sewell, "till this old fellow dies; but you will be paid at last — of that I can assure you. Indeed, if by any turn of luck I was in funds myself, I'd like to redeem it. All I ask is, therefore, that you'll not dispose of it, but hold it over in your own possession till the day — and I hope it may be an early one — it will be payable."

Cave was in no humour to dispute anything. There was no condition to which he would not have acceded, so heartily ashamed and abashed was he by the posi-

tion in which he found himself. What he really would have liked best, would have been to refuse the bond altogether, and say, Pay when you like, how you like, or, better still, not at all. This of course was not possible, and he accepted the terms proposed to him at once.

"It shall be all as you wish," said he, hurriedly. "I will do everything you desire; only, let me assure you that I would infinitely rather this paper remained in *your* keeping than in *mine*. I'm a careless fellow about documents," added he, trying to put the matter on the lesser ground of a safe custody. "Well, well, say no more; you don't wish it, and that's enough."

"I must be able to say," said Sewell, gravely, "that I never lost over night what I had not paid the next morning, and I will even ask of you to corroborate me, so far as this transaction goes. There were several of your fellows at my house last night; they saw what we played for, and that I was the loser. There will be — there always is — plenty of gossip about these things, and the first question is, 'Has he booked up?' I'm sure it's not asking more than you are ready to do, to say that I paid my debt within twenty-four hours."

"Certainly; most willingly. I don't know that any one has a right to question me on the matter."

"I never said he had. I only warned you how people will talk, and how necessary it is to be prepared to stifle a scandal even before it has flared out."

"It shall be cared for. I'll do exactly as you wish," said Cave, who was too much flurried to know what was asked of him, and to what he was pledged.

"I'm glad this is off my mind," said Sewell, with a long sigh of relief. "I lay awake half the night thinking of it; for there are scores of fellows who are not of your stamp, and who would be for submitting these documents to their lawyer, and asking, heaven knows, what this affair related to. Now I tell you frankly, I'd have given no explanations. He who gave that bond is, as I know, a consummate rascal, and has robbed me — that is, my wife — out of two-thirds of her fortune; but *my* hands are tied regarding him. I couldn't, touch him except he should try to take my life — a thing, by the way, he is quite capable of. Old Dillon, my wife's father, believed him to be the best and truest of men, and my wife inherited this belief, even in the face of all the injuries he had worked us. She went on saying, My father always said, Trust Fossy: there's at

least one man in the world that will never deceive you."

"What was the name you said?" asked Cave, quickly.

"Oh, only a nickname. I don't want to mention his name. I have sealed up the bond with this superscription — 'Colonel Sewell's bond.' I did this believing you would not question me farther; but if you desire to read it over, I'll break the envelope at once."

"No, no; nothing of the kind. Leave it just as it is."

"So that," said Sewell, pursuing his former line of thought, "this man not alone defrauded me, but he sowed dissension between me and my wife. Her faith is shaken in him, I have no doubt; but she'll not confess it. Like a genuine woman, she will persist in asserting the convictions she has long ceased to be held by and quote this stupid letter of her father in the face of every fact."

"I ought not to have got into these things," said Sewell, as he walked impatiently down the room. "These family be-devilments should be kept from one's friends; but the murder is out now, and you can see how I stand — and see, besides, that if I am not always able to control my temper, a friend might find an excuse for me."

Cave gave a kindly nod of assent to this, not wishing, even by a word, to increase the painful embarrassment of the scene.

"Heigh ho!" cried Sewell, throwing himself down in a chair, "there's one care off my heart, at least! I can remember a time when a night's bad luck wouldn't have cost me five minutes of annoyance; but nowadays I have got it so hot and so heavy from fortune I begin not to know myself." Then, with a sudden change of tone, he added — "When are you coming out to us again? Shall we say Tuesday?"

"We are to be inspected on Tuesday. Trafford writes me that he is coming over with General Halkett — whom, by the way, he calls a tartar — and says, 'If the Sewells are within hail, say a kind word to them on my part.'"

"A good sort of fellow, Trafford," said Sewell, carelessly.

"An excellent fellow — no better living!"

"A very wide-awake one too," said Sewell, with one eye closed, and a look of intense cunning.

"I never thought so. It is, to my notion, to the want of that faculty he owes every embarrassment he has ever suffered. He is unsuspecting to a fault."

"It's not the way *I* read him; though perhaps I think as well of him as *you* do. I'd say that for his years he is one of the very shrewdest young fellows I ever met."

"You astonish me! May I ask if you know him well?"

"Our acquaintance is not of very old date, but we saw a good deal of each other at the Cape. We rode out together, dined, played, and conversed freely together; and the impression he made upon me was that every sharp lesson the world had given him he'd pay back one day or other with a compound interest."

"I hope not—I fervently hope not!" cried Cave. "I had rather hear to-morrow that he had been duped and cheated out of half his fortune than learn he had done one act that savoured of the—the"—He stopped, unable to finish, for he could not hit upon the word that might be strong enough for his meaning, and yet not imply an offence.

"Say blackleg. Isn't that what you want? There's my wife's pony-chaise. I'll get a seat back to the Nest. Good-bye, Cave. If Wednesday is open, give it to us, and tell Trafford I'd be glad to see him."

Cave sat down as the door closed after the other, and tried to recall his thoughts to something like order. What manner of man was that who had just left him? It was evidently a very mixed nature. Was it the good or the evil that predominated? Was the unscrupulous tone he displayed the result of a spirit of tolerance, or was it the easy indifference of one who trusted nothing—believed nothing?

Was it possible his estimate of Trafford could be correct? and could this seemingly generous and open manner cover a nature cold, calculating, and treacherous? No, no! That he felt to be totally out of the question.

He thought long and intently over the matter, but to no end; and as he rose to deposit the papers left by Sewell in his writing-desk, he felt as unsettled and undecided as when he started on the inquiry.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE RACES ON THE LAWN.

A BRIGHT October morning, with a blue sky and a slight, very slight, feeling of frost in the air, and a gay meeting on foot and horseback on the lawn before the Swan's Nest, made as pretty a picture as a

painter of such scenes could desire. I say of such scenes, because in the *tableau de genre* it is the realistic element that must predominate, and the artist's skill is employed in imparting to very commonplace people and costumes whatever poetry can be lent them by light and shade, by happy groupings, and, more than all these, by the insinuation of some incident in which they are the actors—a sort of storied interest pervading the whole canvass, which gives immense pleasure to those who have little taste for the fine arts.

There was plenty of colour even in the landscape. The mountains had put on their autumn suit, and displayed every tint from a pale opal to a deep and gorgeous purple, while the river ran on in those circling eddies which come to the surface of water under sunshine as naturally as smiles to the face of flattered beauty.

Colonel Sewell had invited the country-side to witness hack races in his grounds, and the country-side had heartily responded to the invitation. There were the county magnates in grand equipages—an earl with two postillions and outriders, a high sheriff with all his official splendours, squires of lower degree in more composite vehicles, and a large array of jaunting-cars, through all of which figured the red coats of the neighbouring garrison, adding to the scene that tint of warmth in colour so dear to the painter's heart.

The wonderful beauty of the spot, combining as it did heath-clad mountain, and wood, and winding river, with a spreading lake in the distance, dotted with picturesque islands, was well seconded by a glorious autumnal day—one of those days when the very air has something of champagne in its exhilarating quality, and gives to every breath of it a sense of stimulation.

The first three races—they were on the flat—had gone off admirably. They were well contested, well ridden, and the "right horse" the winner. All was contentment, therefore, on every side, to which the interval of a pleasant moment of conviviality gave hearty assistance, for now came the hour of luncheon; and from the "swells" in the great marquee, and the favoured intimates in the dining-room, to the assembled unknown in the jaunting-cars, merry laughter issued, with clattering of plates and popping of corks, and those commingled sounds of banter and jollity which mark such gatherings.

The great event of the day was, however, yet to come off. It was a hurdle race, to which two stiff fences were to be added, in

the shape of double ditches, to test the hunting powers of the horses. The hurdles were to be four feet eight in height, so that the course was by no means a despicable one, even to good cross-country riders. To give increased interest to the race Sewell himself was to ride, and no small share of eagerness existed amongst the neighbouring gentry to see how the new-comer would distinguish himself in the saddle — some opining he was too long of leg; some, that he was too heavy; some, that men of his age — he was over five-and-thirty — begin to lose nerve; and many going so far as to imply "that he did not look like riding" — a judgment whose vagueness detracts nothing from its force.

"There he goes now, and he sits well down, too!" cried one, as a group of horsemen swept past, one of whom, mounted on a "sharp" pony, led the way, a white Macintosh and loose overalls covering him from head to foot. They were off to see that the fences were all being properly put up, and in an instant were out of sight.

"I'll back Tom Westenra against Sewell for a twenty-pound note," cried one, standing up on the seat of his car to proclaim the challenge.

"I'll go further," shouted another — "I'll do it for fifty."

"I'll beat you both," cried out a third — "I'll take Tom even against the field."

The object of all this enthusiasm was a smart clean-shaven little fellow, with a good blue eye and a pleasant countenance, who smoked his cigar on the seat of a drag near, and nodded a friendly recognition to their confidence.

"If Joe Slater was well of his fall, I'd rather have him than any one in the county," said an old farmer, true to a man of his own class and standing.

"Here's one can beat them both!" shouted another; "here's Mr. Creagh of Lis-makerry!" and a thin, ruddy-faced, keen-eyed man of about fifty rode by on a low-sized horse, with that especial look of decision in his mouth, and the peculiar puckering about the corners, that seem to belong to those who traffic in horse-flesh, and who, it would appear, however much they may know about horses, understand humanity more thoroughly still.

"Are you going to ride, Creagh?" cried a friend from a high tax-cart.

"Maybe so, if the fences are not too big for me," and a very malicious drollery twinkled in his grey eye.

"Faix, and if they are," said a farmer, "the rest may stay at home."

"I hope you'll ride, Creagh," said the first speaker, "and not let these English fellows take the shine out of us. Yourself and Tom are the only county names on the card."

"Show it to me," said Creagh, listlessly, and he took the printed list in his hand and conned it over, as though it had all been new to him. "They're all soldiers, I see," said he. "It's Major This, and Captain That — Who is the lady?" This question was rapidly called forth by a horsewoman who rode past at an easy canter in the midst of a group of men. She was dressed in a light-gray habit and hat of the same colour, from which a long white feather encircling the hat hung on one side.

"That's Mrs. Sewell — what do you think of her riding?"

"If her husband has as neat a hand I'd rather he was out of the course. She knows well what she's about."

"They say there's not her equal in the Park in London."

"That's not Park riding; that's something very different, take my word for it. She could lead half the men here across the country."

Nor was she unworthy of the praise, as, with her hand low, her head a little forward, but her back well curved in, she sat firmly down in her saddle; giving to the action of the horse that amount of movement that assisted the animal, but never more. The horse was mettlesome enough to require all her attention. It was his first day under a side-saddle, and he chafed at it, and when the heavy skirt smote his flank, bounded with a lunge and a stroke of his head that showed anger.

"That's a four hundred guinea beast she's on. He belongs to the tall young fellow that's riding on her left."

"I like his own horse better, the liver-chestnut with the short legs. I wish I had a loan of him for the hurdle race."

"Ask him, Phil; or get the mistress there to ask him," said another, laughing. "I'm mighty mistaken or he wouldn't refuse her."

"Oh, is that it?" said Creagh, with a knowing look.

"So they tell me here, for I don't know one of them myself; but the story goes that she was to have married that young fellow when Sewell carried her off."

"I must go and get a better look at her!" said Creagh, as he spurred his horse, and cantered away.

"Is any one betting?" said little Westenra, as he descended from his seat on the

drag. "I have not seen a man to-day with five pounds on the race."

"Here's Sewell," muttered another; "he's coming up now, and will give or take as much as you like."

"Did you see Mrs. Sewell any of you?" asked Sewell, cavalierly, as he rode up with an open telegram in his hand; and as the persons addressed were for the most part his equals, none responded to the insolent demand.

"Could you tell me, sir," said Sewell, quickly altering his tone, while he touched his hat to Westenra, "if Mrs. Sewell passed this way?"

"I haven't the honour to know Mrs. Sewell, but I saw a lady ride past, about ten minutes ago, on a black thoroughbred."

"Faix, and well she rode him too," broke in an old farmer. "She took the posey out of that young gentleman's button-hole, while her beast was jumping, and stuck it in her breast, as easy as I'm sitting here."

Sewell's face grew purple as he darted a look of savage anger at the speaker, and, turning his horse's head, he dashed out at speed and disappeared.

"Peter Delaney," said Westenra, "I thought you had more discretion than to tell such a story as that."

"Begorra, Mister Tom! I didn't know the mischief I was making till I saw the look he gave me!"

It was not till after a considerable search that Sewell came up with his wife's party, who were sauntering leisurely along the river-side, through a gorse-covered slope.

"I've had a devil of a hunt after you!" he cried, as he rode up, and the ringing tone of his voice was enough to intimate to her in what temper he spoke. "I've something to say to you," said he, as though meant for her private ear, and the others drew back, and suffered them to ride on together. "There's a telegram just come from that old beast the Chief Baron; he desires to see me to-night. The last train leaves at five, and I shall only hit it by going at once. Can't you keep your horse quiet, madam, or must you show off while I'm speaking to you?"

"It was the furze that stung him," said she, coldly, and not showing the slightest resentment at his tone.

"If the old bear means anything short of dying, and leaving me his heir, this message is a shameful swindle."

"Do you mean to go?" asked she, coldly.

"I suppose so; that is," added he, with a

bitter grin, "if I can tear myself away from you;" but she only smiled.

"I'll have to pay forfeit in this match," continued he, "and my book will be all smashed besides. I say," cried he, "would Trafford ride for me?"

"Perhaps he would."

"None of your mock indifference, madam. I can't afford to lose a thousand pounds every time you've a whim. Ay, look astonished if you like! but if you hadn't gone into the billiard-room on Saturday evening and spoiled my match, I'd have escaped that infernal whist-table. Listen to me now! Tell him that I have been sent for suddenly—it might be too great a risk for me to refuse to go—and ask him to ride Crescy; if he says Yes—and he will say yes if you ask him as you ought"—her cheek grew crimson as he uttered the last word with a strong emphasis—"tell him to take up my book. Mind you, use the words 'take up;' he'll understand you."

"But why not say all this yourself?—he's riding close behind at this minute."

"Because I have a wife, madam, who can do it so much better—because I have a wife who plucks a carnation out of a man's coat, and wears it in her bosom, and this on an open race-course, where people can talk of it; and a woman with such rare tact ought to be of service to her husband, eh?" She swayed to and fro in her saddle for an instant as though about to fall, but she grasped the crutch with both hands and saved herself.

"Is that all!" muttered she, faintly.

"Not quite. Tell Trafford to come round to my dressing-room, and I'll give him a hint or two about the horse. He must come at once, for I have only time to change my clothes and start. You can make some excuse to the people for my absence; say that the old Judge has had another attack, and I only wish it may be true. Tell them I got a telegram, and that may mean anything. Trafford will help you to do the honours, and I'll swear him in as viceroy before I go. Isn't that all that could be asked of me?" The insolence of his look as he said this made her turn away her head as though sickened and disgusted.

"They want you at the weighing-stand, Colonel Sewell," said a gentleman, riding up.

"Oh, they do! Well, say, please, that I'm coming. Has he given you that black horse?" asked he, in a hurried whisper.

"No; he offered him, but I refused."

"You had no right to refuse; he's strong enough to carry *me*; and the ponies that I saw led round to the stable-yard, whose are they?"

"They are Mr. Trafford's."

"You told him you thought them handsome, I suppose, didn't you?"

"Yes, I think them very beautiful."

"Well, don't take them as a present. Win them if you like at picquet or ecarté — any way you please, but don't take them as a gift, for I heard Westenra say they were meant for you."

She nodded, and as she bent her head, a smile, the very strangest, crossed her features. If it were not that the pervading expression of her face was at that instant melancholy, the look she gave him would have been almost devilish.

"I have something else to say, but I can't remember it."

"You don't know when you'll be back?" asked she, carelessly.

"Of course not — how can I? I can only promise that I'll not arrive unexpectedly, madam; and I take it that's as much as any gentleman can be called on to say. By-bye."

"Good-bye," said she, in the same tone.

"I see that Mr. Balfour is here. I can't tell who asked him; but mind you don't invite him to luncheon; take no notice of him whatever; he'll not bet a guinea; never plays; never risks anything — even his *affections*!"

"What a creature!"

"Isn't he! There! I'll not detain you from pleasanter company; good-bye; see you here when I come back, I suppose?"

"Most probably," said she, with a smile; and away he rode, at a tearing gallop, for his watch warned him that he was driven to the last minute.

"My husband has been sent for to town, Mr. Trafford," said she, turning her head towards him as he resumed his place at her side; "the Chief Baron desires to see him immediately, and he sets off at once."

"And his race? What's to become of his match?"

"He said I was to ask you to ride for him."

"Me — I ride! Why, I am two stone heavier than he is."

"I suppose he knew that," said she, coldly, and as if the matter was one of complete indifference to her.

"I am only delivering a message," continued she, in the same careless tone; "he said, 'Ask Mr. Trafford to ride for me, and

take up my book;' I was to be particular about the phrase 'take up;' I conclude you will know what meaning to attach to it."

"I suspect I do," said he, with a low soft laugh.

"And I was to add something about hints he was to give you, if you'd go round to his dressing-room at once; indeed, I believe you have little time to spare."

"Yes, I'll go; I'll go now; only there's one thing I'd like to ask — that is — I'd be very glad to know —"

"What is it?" said she, after a pause, in which his confusion seemed to increase with every minute.

"I mean, I should like to know whether you wished me to ride this race or not?"

"Whether *I* wished it?" said she, in a tone of astonishment.

"Well, whether you cared about the matter one way or other," replied he, in still deeper embarrassment.

"How could it concern me, my dear Mr. Trafford?" said she, with an easy smile; "a race never interests me much, and I'd just as soon see Blue and Orange come in, as Yellow and Black; but you'll be late if you intend to see my husband; I think you'd better make haste."

"So I will, and I'll be back immediately," said he, not sorry to escape a scene where his confusion was now making him miserable.

"You *are* a very nice horse!" said she, patting the animal's neck, as he chafed to dash off after the other. "I'd like very much to own you; that is, if I ever was to call anything my own."

"They're clearing the course, Mrs. Sewell," said one of her companions, riding up; "we had better turn off this way, and ride round to the stand."

"Here's a go!" cried another, coming up at speed. "Big Trafford is going to ride Crescy; he's well-nigh fourteen stone."

"Not thirteen; I'll lay a tenner on it."

"He can't ride a bit," said a third.

"I'd rather he rode his own horse than mine."

"Sewell knows what he's about, depend on't."

"That's his wife," whispered another; "I'm certain she heard you."

Mrs. Sewell turned her head as she cantered along, and, in the strange smile her features wore, seemed to confirm the speaker's words; but the bustle and hurry of the moment drowned all sense of embarrassment, and the group dashed onward to the stand.

Leaving that heaving, panting, surging

tide of humanity for an instant, let us turn to the house, where Sewell was already engaged in preparing for the road.

"You are going to ride for me, Trafford?" said Sewell, as the other entered his dressing-room, where, with the aid of his servant, he was busily packing up for the road.

"I'm not sure; that is, I don't like to refuse, and I don't see how to accept."

"My wife has told you; I'm sent for hurriedly."

"Yes."

"Well?" said he, looking round at him from his task.

"Just as I have told you already; I'll ride for you as well as a heavy fellow could take a light-weight's place, but I don't understand about your book — am I to stand your engagements?"

"You mean, are you to win all the money I'm sure to pocket on the match?"

"No, I don't mean that," said he, laughing; "I never thought of trading on another man's brains; I simply meant, am I to be responsible for the losses?"

"If you ride Crescy as you ought to ride him, you needn't fret about the losses."

"But suppose that I do not — and the case is a very possible one — that, not knowing your horse —"

"Take this portmanteau down, Bob, and the carpet-bag; I shall only lose my train," said Sewell, with a gesture of hot impatience; and, as the servant left the room, he added, "pray don't think any more about this stupid race; scratch Crescy, and tell my wife that it was a change of mind on *my* part — that I did not wish you to ride; good-bye;" and he waved a hasty adieu with his hand, as though to dismiss him at once.

"If you'll let me ride for you, I'll do my best," blundered out Trafford; "when I spoke of your engagements, it was only to prepare you for what perhaps you were not aware of, that I'm not very well off just now, and that if anything like a heavy sum —"

"You are a most cautious fellow; I only wonder how you ever did get into a difficulty; but I'm not the man to lead you astray, and wreck such splendid principles; adieu!"

"I'll ride, let it end how it may!" said Trafford, angrily, and left the room at once, and hurried down stairs.

Sewell gave a parting look at himself in the glass; and, as he set his hat jauntily on one side, said, "There's nothing like a little mock indignation to bully fellows of *his* stamp; the key-note of their natures is the dread of being thought mean, and particu-

larly of being thought mean by a woman." He laughed pleasantly at this conceit, and went on his way.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SEWELL ARRIVES IN DUBLIN.

It was late at night when Sewell reached town. An accidental delay to the train deferred the arrival for upwards of an hour after the usual time, and when he reached the Priory the house was all closed for the night, and not a light to be seen.

He knocked, however, and rang boldly; and after a brief delay, and considerable noise of unbolting and unbarring, was admitted. "We gave you up, sir, after twelve o'clock," said the butler, half reproachfully, "and his lordship ordered the servants to bed. Miss Lendrick, however, is in her drawing-room still."

"Is there anything to eat, my good friend? that is what I stand most in need of just now."

"There's a cold rib of beef, sir, and a grouse pie; but if you'd like something hot, I'll call the cook."

"No, no, never mind the cook; you can give me some sherry, I'm sure?"

"Any wine you please, sir. We have excellent madeira, which ain't to be had everywhere nowadays."

"Madeira be it, then; and order a fire in my room. I take it you have a room for me?"

"Yes, sir, all is ready; the bath was hot about an hour ago, and I'll have it refreshed in a minute."

"Now for the grouse pie. By the way, Fenton, what is the matter with his lordship? he wasn't ill was he, when he sent off that despatch to me?"

"No, sir; he was in court to-day, and he dined at the Castle, and was in excellent spirits before he went out."

"Has anything gone wrong, then, that he wanted me up so hurriedly?"

"Well, sir, it ain't so easy to say, his lordship excites himself so readily; and mayhap he had words with some of the judges — mayhap with his Excellency, for they're always at him about resigning, little knowing that if they'd only let him alone he'd go of himself, but if they press him he'll stay on these twenty years."

"I don't suspect he has got so many as twenty years before him."

"If he wants to live, sir, he'll do it. Ah, you may laugh, sir, but I have known him

all my life, and I never saw the man like him to do the thing he wishes to do."

"Cut me some of that beef, Fenton, and fetch me some draught beer. How these old tyrants make slaves of their servants," said he, aloud, as the man left the room — "a slavery that enthralls mind as well as body." A gentle tap came to the door, and before Sewell could question the summons, Miss Lendrick entered. She greeted him cordially, and said how anxiously her grandfather had waited for him till midnight. "I don't know when I saw him so eager or so impatient," she said.

"Have you any clue to his reason for sending for me?" said he, as he continued to eat, and assumed an air of perfect unconcern.

"None whatever. He came into my room about two o'clock, and told me to write his message in a good bold hand; he seemed in his usual health, and his manner displayed nothing extraordinary. He questioned me about the time it would take to transmit the message from the town to your house, and seemed satisfied when I said about half-an-hour."

"It's just as likely, perhaps, to be some caprice — some passing fancy."

She shook her head dissentingly, but made no reply.

"I believe the theory of this house is, 'he can do no wrong,'" said Sewell, with a laugh.

"He is so much more able in mind than all around him, such a theory might prevail; but I'll not go so far as to say that it does."

"It's not his mind gives him his pre-eminence, Miss Lucy — it's his temper; it's that same strong will that overcomes weaker natures by dint of sheer force. The people who assert their own way in life are not the most intellectual, they are only the best bullies."

"You know very little of grandpapa, Colonel Sewell, that's clear."

"Are you so sure of that?" asked he with a dubious smile.

"I am sure of it, or in speaking of him you would never have used such a word as bully."

"You mistake me — mistake me altogether, young lady. I spoke of a class of people who employ certain defects of temper to supply the place of certain gifts of intellect; and if your grandfather, who has no occasion for it, chooses to take a weapon out of their armoury, the worse taste his."

Lucy turned fiercely round, her face flushed and her lip trembling. An angry

reply darted through her mind, but she repressed it by a great effort, and in a faint voice she said, "I hope you left Mrs. Sewell well?"

"Yes, perfectly well, amusing herself vastly. When I saw her last she had about half-a-dozen young fellows cantering on either side of her, saying, doubtless, all those pleasant things that you ladies like to hear."

Lucy shrugged her shoulders, without answering.

"Telling you," continued he, in the same strain, "that if you are unmarried you are angels, and that if married you are angels and martyrs too; and it is really a subject that requires investigation, how the best of wives is not averse to hearing her husband does not half estimate her. Don't toss your head so impatiently, my dear Miss Lucy; I am giving you the wise precepts of a very thoughtful life."

"I had hoped, Colonel Sewell, that a very thoughtful life might have brought forth pleasant reflections."

"No, that is precisely what it does not do. To live as long as I have, is to arrive at a point when all the shams have been seen through, and the world exhibits itself pretty much as a stage during a day rehearsal."

"Well, sir, I am too young to profit by such experiences, and I will wish you a very good night — that is, if I can give no orders for anything you wish."

"I have had everything. I will finish this madeira — to your health — and hope to meet you in the morning, as beautiful and as trustful as I see you now — *felice notte*." He bowed as he opened the door for her to pass out, and she went, with a slight bend of the head and a faint smile, and left him.

"How I could make you beat your wings against your cage, for all your bravery, if I had only three days here, and cared to do it," said he, as he poured the rest of the wine into his glass. "How weary I could make you of this old house and its owner. Within one month — one short month — I'd have you repeating as wise saws every sneer and every sarcasm that you just now took fire at. And if I am to pass three days in this dreary old dungeon I don't see how I could do better. What can he possibly want with me?" All the imaginable contingencies he could conjure up now passed before his mind. That the old man was sick of solitude, and wanted him to come and live with them; that he was desirous of adopting one of the children, and

which of them? formed a query; that he had held some correspondence with Fossbrooke, and wanted some explanations—a bitter pang, that racked and tortured him while he revolved it; and, last of all, he came back to his first guess—it was about his will he had sent for him. He had been struck by the beauty of the children, and asked their names and ages twice or thrice over; doubtless he was bent on making some provision for them. “I wish I could tell him that I’d rather have ten thousand down, than thrice the sum settled on Guy and the girls. I wish I could explain to him that mine is a ready-money business, and that cash is the secret of success; and I wish I could show him that no profits will stand the reverses of loans raised at two hundred per cent! I wonder how the match went off to-day; I’d like to have the odds that their were three men down at the double rail and bank.” Who got first over the brook, was his next speculation, and where was Trafford? “If he punished Crescy, I think I could tell *that*,” muttered he, with a grin of malice. “I only wish I was there to see it;” and in the delight this thought afforded, he tossed off his last glass of wine, and rang for his bed-room candle.

“At what time shall I call you, sir?” asked the butler.

“When are you stirring here—I mean, at what hour does Sir William breakfast?”

“He breakfasts at eight, sir, during term; but he does not expect to see any one but Miss Lucy so early.”

“I should think not. Call me at eleven, then, and bring me some coffee and a glass of rum when you come. Do you mean to tell *me*,” said he, in a somewhat stern tone, “that the Chief Baron gets up at seven o’clock?”

“In term time, sir, he does every day.”

“Egad! I’m well pleased that I have not a seat on the Bench. I’d not be Lord Chancellor at that price.”

“It’s very hard on the servants, sir—very hard indeed.”

“I suppose it is,” said Sewell, with a treacherous twinkle of the eye.

“If it wasn’t that I’m expecting the usher’s place in the court, I’d have resigned long ago.”

“His lordship’s pleasant temper, however, makes up for everything, Fenton, eh?”

“Yes, sir, that’s true;” and they both laughed heartily at the pleasant conceit; and in this merry humour they went their several ways to bed.

NOTHING TO DO.

A STRIP of snowiest linen

Half-broidered and stamped in blue,

And the gleam of a threadless needle

Piercing the pattern through:

The needle is ready, yet the sweet little Lady

Sits sighing for something to do.

Heaped on the table beside her

Blossoms of every hue;

Delicate, odorous roses—

The rarest that ever grew:

The vase stands ready while the sweet little Lady

Sits wishing for something to do.

Half hid under flowers a volume

In daintiest gold and blue,

Just parted, as if it would open

At “The Miller’s Daughter” for you:

The book lies ready, yet the sweet little Lady
Sits sighing for something to do.

A silent harp in the corner,

And melodies old and new

Scattered in pretty disorder—

Songs of the false and the true:

The harp stands ready—still the sweet little Lady

Sits longing for something to do.

A sudden wind-sweep and flutter—

The door wide open blew;

A step in the hall, and swiftly,

Like a bird, to the threshold she flew:

Blushing, already the sweet little Lady

Forgets she has nothing to do!

HARRIET McEWEEN KIMBALL.

Portsmouth, N. H.

—Transcript.

From the Press.

THE EIGHTH-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

THE eighth centenary of the consecration of Westminster Abbey was celebrated on Dec. 28, with much solemnity. The last hereditary King of England before the Norman Conquest, Edward the Confessor, had long designed the erection of a church and abbey in Westminster. On the Feast of the Holy Innocents (December 28), 1065, he was barely able from mortal illness to be present at the consecration of his abbey, but signed the charter of its foundation, and died eight days afterwards. Thursday being Innocents' Day, the dean and chapter determined to commemorate the anniversary with an elaborate ceremonial service.

At ten o'clock a long procession moved from the Jerusalem Chamber up the nave towards the choir in the following order:—The choir of the abbey, reinforced by several gentlemen forming the special evening service choir; the Rev. J. C. Haden (precentor), the Revs. S. F. Jones, J. Antrobus, and C. M. Arnold, minor canons; the Ven. Christopher Wordsworth, D.D., archdeacon and canon; the Revs. J. Jennings, E. Nepean, and W. Conway, canons; the Rev. Lord John Thynne, D.D., sub-dean; the Very Rev. A. P. Stanley, D.D., dean. Prayers were chanted by the Rev. S. F. Jones, and the lessons read by the Rev. Precentor Haden. The music was most appropriately chosen from composers connected with the abbey, either in times past or present.

In the afternoon the "service" was by Benjamin Cooke, Mus. Doc., organist of the abbey, buried in the west cloister, and the anthem, "Cry aloud and shout" (Isaiah xii. 6), by William Croft, Mus. Doc., organist of the abbey, buried in the north aisle.

Of living composers we were favoured by the accomplished organist of the abbey, Mr. James Torle, with a "service" in D and a "credo" in D in the morning, and a Psalm chant in the afternoon; the morning "Venite" and the chants to Psalms 133, 134, and 135, by Mr. J. L. Brownsmith, vicar-choral of the abbey, and the chant to Psalm 132 by Mr. J. Foster, another vicar-choral; the "Kyrie," by Mr. A. Montem Smith, a third vicar-choral; the "Introit," All Saints' tune, by Mrs. J. J. B. E. Frere, niece of the late Rev. Temple Frere, Canon of Westminster, the words (from "The Holy Year,") being by the Ven. Christopher Wordsworth, D.D., Canon Archdeacon of Westminster. All the music was given with exquisite taste.

The Rev. Lord John Thynne, D.D., sub-dean, read the Communion service, except the epistle, which was read by the Rev. C. M. Arnold.

The sermon was preached by the Dean (Dr. Stanley), from John x. 21, 22, "And it was at Jerusalem, the Feast of the Dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the Temple, in Solomon's porch." "The words of the text," the preacher said, "were peculiarly suitable to the occasion, as they connected our Blessed Lord with a sense of the great historic past and the recollection of a famous anniversary. It was the Feast of the Dedication, but not that of the first foundation, but of that after its reconstruction by Judas Maccabæus, when He and all His followers saw the Sanctuary of God lying desolate, and shrubs and weeds growing in its courts. And not only in that do we find a parallel with our anniversary to-day, but 'it was winter,' and the very time of the joyful celebration corresponds with our 25th of December, the same inclement season which we read in the Prophet Ezra was so depressing to the people. It was then, upon such an anniversary as this, not one of their greatest, and not one of those sanctioned by the law and the prophets, but full of the memories which belonged to the history of the nation, that Jesus went up to Jerusalem and 'walked in the Temple in Solomon's porch,' and thus blessed it by His presence. And upon such an anniversary as this we are gathered together in a building, which, if less famous and in some respects less sacred, yet presents to us far grander dimensions and historical remembrances as important to us as those of Judas Maccabæus to the Jews of old. Eight hundred years have passed since on this day the Abbey was completed and dedicated which, like the Temple of the Jews, was beautified and adorned beyond all other buildings, and in its magnificence swept away every vestige of that which was left of the work of earlier times. We know not what existed here before, or whether it was the Royal Edgar, the doubtful Sebert, or the still more doubtful Lucius, who first erected a fane for the worship of God amid the entangled thickets and stagnant waters of Thorney Island, divided by many a stream, and not a few green meadows, from the Roman fortress on the distant hills of London. We need not go back to them. We may be content to carry our thoughts back for eight centuries, when the act was completed which first fixed the destinies of this building and this spot for all future time. There is something in the simple words of the Saxon chronicler in

recording this event, which finds an echo in the words of the text, 'At mid-winter King Edward came to Westminster, and had the minster there consecrated which he had himself built to the honour of God and of St. Peter, and of all God's saints.' It was at Christmas when the Court re-assembled, as was usual in that age, in the adjoining palace of Westminster, and when this long-desired dedication was to be accomplished. The King had long been impressed with the thought, like David in the psalm we have just sung — 'I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, nor mine eyelids to slumber, neither the temples of my head to take any rest until I find out a place for the great sanctuary,' which henceforth was to be the centre of his kingdom. On Christmas Day he appeared in state, wearing his Royal Crown, but that night he was seized with the last fatal illness. He struggled through the next two days, but on the festival of the Holy Innocents the King was too weak to take any part in the ceremony, yet he roused himself so as to be able to sign the charter of foundation, and to direct the Queen and Court to join the assembly within these walls, now, indeed, venerable with age, but then white and fresh from the hands of the builders, and which were about to receive the rite of consecration. By that effort the feeble frame and over-taxed spirit of the King was worn out, and in the evening of Innocents' Day he sank into a mortal stupor. One startling rally took place on the 5th of January. Recollections of two favourite teachers of his youth, dim and shadowy fears as to the future of his country, a few incoherent words as to the succession, variously reported, burst from his lips, some expressions respecting his hopes in passing from death to life, and he then expired in the chamber long called after his name in the old Palace of Westminster. We are told by the historians that at his death a thrill of horror filled the whole nation. With him it seemed as if the freedom, the strength, and the happiness of the people had vanished away, so dark were their forebodings. And the next day, while the new King Harold was being crowned at St. Paul's the Confessor was buried in the newly-finished abbey, the first of the hundreds who have since been laid here around his honoured grave. This is not the time nor place to enlarge on the merely historical or antiquarian interest of these remarkable events — to describe how the present fabric corresponds with that erected by Edward, or where we can still lay hands upon stones that witnessed the scene of that first burial

— what has been done or what still remains to be done to complete and carry on the work which was, as upon this day, dedicated forever to God. But there are reflections suggested by these events which can be offered nowhere so fitly as on this occasion and from this place. First the celebration of this foundation connects the whole growth of the abbey and all its glories, suggests that the life and death and grave of such an one as our founder is a lasting tribute to the enduring force of that childlike goodness which distinguished him. Let us see what his character was. If we look at the details of history, it is hardly possible to imagine a figure more unlike any of our own time. The guileless King, who alone of all the canonised English saints still rests undisturbed in his ancient shrine, we know him well as he is described by his contemporaries. We see his grave and gentle figure moving solemnly along with downcast eyes; we recognise his rose-red face, contrasted with the milky whiteness of his hair and beard, and as he draws near we hear one of those startling bursts of unearthly rapture with which it was his wont to break his ordinary silence; we see his thin white hands and long transparent fingers with which it was believed at the time, and centuries afterwards, he had the power of touching away as it were the diseases of his subjects. In his conduct we find a childishness of thought and action, and it is evident to us now that his title of Saint and Confessor arose as much out of the jealousies of ecclesiastics and the policy of the Norman rulers of the country as out of the loving regret of his Saxon subjects. In spite of all divergencies, his innocent and childlike faith was the secret of the charm exercised by him over his countrymen. We sometimes hear it said, with a cynical sneer, that many are buried here who are great without being good, many wise without being simple, many noble whose nobility is not that of virtue, but of the earth, earthy, and of the world, worldly; but meanly do they conceive of the goodness of God who would complain of this recognition of His gifts to man. The central tomb around which these warriors and statesmen and great men repose contains the ashes of one weak and erring as they were, but who rests his claim to interment here, not on his rank or deeds, although he ranked with the great ones of the earth, but on the artless piety and guileless faith of those early days. He to whose dust was attracted the fierce Norman, the proud Plantagenet, the grasping Tudor, the fickle Stuart, the powerful Edward, the frivolous

Richard, the worldly Elizabeth, the light-hearted Charles, the Dutch William, and the Hanoverian George, and even in his death the Independent Oliver, was one whose virtues were within the reach of every man, woman, and child in every age, if we only separate the perishable form from the immortal substance. To follow his footsteps we must not look to his age, but to our own — not to the 11th, but to the 19th century. Again, this day invites us to think that not only have eight centuries rolled by and brought with them their accumulated stores of thought and wealth and experience to our country, but the very event we are celebrating was itself the beginning of a new order of things. The year in which the abbey was dedicated was not only the last year of the Confessor's life and reign, but the eve of the Norman Conquest — the greatest change, with one exception — the Reformation — which this church and nation ever witnessed. Christmas, 1065, was the last which ever saw a Saxon King worship within these sacred precincts. Edward, Saxon as he was by birth, was Norman by education, and almost to the last year of his life he wavered between a Saxon and a Norman for his successor. This house was a shadow cast before by the coming event. Few changes could be more significant than that which replaced the wooden wattled church of the Anglo-Saxon period with the majestic pile, the architecture of which Edward brought from the Norman. Its solid pillars, its rounded arches, its lofty roof, its cruciform plan, and its storied windows were all new and strange to the people of that age in a degree we can hardly conceive now, and of this new style and shape and dimensions the abbey built by the Confessor was the first example. When Harold, with his brother Gurth and his sister Editha, passed beneath these lofty towers and signed his name to the charter of this abbey, he might have known that he was signing his own doom and preparing his own destruction. The old cathedral, as it was then called, at Winchester, where the Saxon kings for centuries had been crowned and buried, was then discarded, and the Royal favour settled upon Westminster. It was founded, therefore, not only in faith, but in hope — in the hope that England had yet a glorious career to run, in the hope that the line of her great sovereigns had not dried up, even when the race of Alfred ceased to live, and that the troubles which the Confessor saw in prophetic vision would pass away, and that a brighter day was yet in store than he or any other

living man at that time could anticipate. It was founded in hopes that have been more than fulfilled. We know that this abbey has been renovated and beautified by successive kings whenever for a time it was neglected or disfigured, and that it has kept its hold upon the affections and reverence of the whole English people. We know how its precincts have witnessed not only every successive stage of the English monarchy, but the rise and growth of English constitutional freedom. We know how it has been the refuge, in life and death, to princes who had no other place in which to lay their heads — how on the change of faith (greater, as I have said, than the Norman conquest) it received the great shock of the Reformation, and became a shelter for that famous school which is bound to it by so many illustrious names, and how under its shadow were held assemblies to discuss momentous questions affecting the interests of the Church of England, and also to compile and set forth the only confession of faith ever imposed by law upon the population of the whole island, and which at the present moment, although bearing the name of Westminster, is the established formula of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, — how its walls embrace memorials from every rank and profession in life — sovereigns and statesmen, divided in all but death and the hope of a common resurrection; the doubting sceptic hard by the enthusiastic believer — the ornaments of other communions, Romanist, Puritan, Dissenting, beside the uncompromising prelates of our own, the smoking flax beside the blazing lamp, the bruised reed beside the sturdy tree. Such has been the development and expansion of the seed planted here by our founder, and we do well to think of it. The Abbey, so regarded, is a standing monument and witness of the peculiar process by which our English Constitution has been framed, and the peculiar duties we owe to it as Englishmen and as Christians. The Norman Church, founded by a Saxon king, the new future springing out of the dying past, new progress with old liberty, prerogative side by side with precedent, Church and State inextricably mixed with each other, opposing parties in Church and State neutralizing, counterbalancing, and completing each other, neither by the other entirely subdued, each by the other honoured and respected. From this thought we pass naturally to the direct object of the foundation of this august benefice. I speak not now of the curious legends and dreams and visions which wrought upon the Confessor's mind, but I

refer to the fixed intention, which has never died out, that this magnificent pile should be a house where Christian souls might meet and hold converse with their Maker. Whatever it has since become — Royal, heroic, historic, or artistic, it has always been a place dedicated for ever to the worship of Almighty God. This, it is true, is a character which it shares with the humblest church or chapel in the kingdom, but to us who here carry on that worship the greatness and importance of our office must be brought home with double force with the reflection that on it, as on the invisible thread, hangs every other interest which from generation to generation has accumulated around us. Break this thread, and the whole building becomes an unmeaning labyrinth, a cold artificial Valhalla, a lifeless museum. But in all times, in sorrow and in joy, in difficulty and in triumph, God, the consoler and the giver, has been sought here in prayer and praise. And you who take part in our services day by day, you who add by your tuneful voices new graces and force to those services, join hand to hand and heart to heart with those who in times gone by found out those musical tunes which we to-day sing over their graves — join with them to make the worship worthy of the place as the place is worthy of the worship." The preacher then, after pointing out that the Confessor, in founding the abbey, had, in fact, also founded the city of Westminster, made an eloquent appeal on behalf of those without the walls in poverty and sickness, with a view to the collection which was about to be made for the Westminster Hospital, and concluded with an eloquent invocation for the Divine blessing.

The prayers were intoned by the Rev. Mr. Flood Jones. The Communion Service was read by the Sub-dean, and the Holy Communion was administered to a large number of communicants, the service being choral.

In the afternoon there was another special musical service, and the abbey was crowded.

From the Economist.

AMERICAN FINANCE.

THE report of the Secretary of the Treasury, just delivered to Congress, is, perhaps, the most remarkable of the many remarkable documents which the American civil war has suggested. The most curious pe-

culiarity is its contrast to European ideal. People in Europe have been arguing whether or not the interest on the United States debt would be paid, whether the American Government would not go on to issue more and more "greenbacks," more and more irredeemable currency. In the face of the European controversy Mr. McCulloch goes down to Congress and proposes to redeem all the "greenbacks," to pay all the national note currency now out, and to devote *forty millions sterling annually* to the payment of the interest on the debt, and to the liquidation of the principal. No such bold propositions have ever, we believe, been offered to any nation at the end of a great war — a war of the first magnitude. In 1815 our Government had no currency of its own to reform; the depreciated notes were bank notes, and, perhaps, it was fortunate that it was so; but on the matters with which it had to deal the English Government did not act as the American Government. It made no vast effort, it proposed to vast effort, to pay off the debt; it abandoned all idea of a surplus revenue, it took off the income tax and what other taxes it could, and it abolished the "sinking fund," which it had maintained during the war and while it was useless, at the beginning of peace, and just when there would have been real money for it. Whether the Americans will effect more than the English, we do not say, but at any rate they have plans more equal to their great place. Whatever the nation may do, their Finance Minister, at least, hopes for large schemes and aims at great ends.

The American secretary's message runs into innumerable topics, all of great importance, and great interest, but a paper as long as his, — and his is very long, — is needful to follow him fully, even to half of them. We only wish to show our readers, in brief, with what realities and with what prospects this great war now concludes. And we follow the Secretary's own division in separating the matter into three heads — the Taxation, the Debt, and the Currency.

First, as to the taxation. An Englishman regards finance not with that fond and half-romantic feeling with which the happy statesman at the head of a new country casts up in prophecy its unbounded resources, but with the patient and carefulness of an old world where labour is difficult, where much of it is ill paid, where failure is easy, where success *after* failure is all but impossible. The Americans, with unequalled, though untried resources, are

in the place of justified hope; we, with less resources, but after many trials, ought at least to have an enriched experience and an instructed caution.

What, then, are the facts? The outgoing side of the last year's accounts of the United States is stupendous, more than 200,000,000/ (above three times the ordinary expenditure) to be spent on the War department alone, and the other expenses were great too. Civil government costs much when a new internal revenue of vast magnitude is in the course of organization, and a blockade over an immense coast must create great naval outlay. The figures are:—

EXPENDITURE OF UNITED STATES for the year ending * 30th June, 1865.

	£
Civil Service	8,953,110
Pensions and Indians	2,851,704
War department	206,264,676
Navy —	24,513,554
Interest on public debt	15,479,542
Total Expenditure	253,062,586

Probably the largest sum any nation has spent in twelve months. The largest we ever spent was in the year 1814, 106,832,000/, of which 76,780,000/, was for war and other outlay, and the rest 30,052,000/ for interest on debt. The Americans have a perceptible pride in the money they have spent, and it is impossible to wonder at it.

They may well be proud of being able to find that money. How it has been raised is for many purposes most material; that manner may affect the nation in many incalculable ways for good and for evil. But for the present purpose that manner is not at all material. The national effort, the national destruction of wealth, *the capital the country had to find*, is the same. The army was paid, armed, and fed; the cost of subduing the South was defrayed. Whether the capital so required was abstracted by loans or taxes is upon this general view immaterial. It was abstracted; it was taken from the nation, and the soldiers were paid and clothed with it.

The money was found thus:—

TAXATION AND LAND SALES.

	£	£
Customs	16,985,652	
Land	199,310	

* The figures here and elsewhere are given at 4s to the dollar. The value of the currency has fluctuated so much that a retrospect of the war at the true exchange of the day would be a task of infinite labour.

Direct tax	240,114	
Internal revenue	41,192,842	
Miscellaneous resources	6,595,656	
		65,913,574
Loans		172,972,698
Reduction of balance in Treasury		19,176,324
		258,062,596

It cannot be said that this is a very good specimen of financial management. At the crisis of the nation's destiny the painful effort, the effort by taxes, ought to have borne a larger proportion to the easy effort—the effort by loans. Still it may be said that the Federal taxation is between four and five times what it was in 1860; the effect of the war has been to quadruple, and more than quadruple, the taxation of the country. The proportion of the present taxes to the late outlay is small, but the proportion of the present taxes to the old taxes is large, and what is more material than any comparison, the money was, in fact, obtained—obtained at home in this way.

What we have to ask is, now that the crisis is past, now that the war is over, how will America now stand? The year ending June 30, 1866, next June, is naturally so complicated with temporary expenditure and the outlay incident on the conclusion of the war, that it is not very instructive. It is half way between the past war and the coming peace, and so does not bring out the salient points of either. But happily, according to the American custom of giving three years' figures at once (one year wholly past, another a quarter over, and a third wholly to come), Mr. M. Culloch puts before us a budget for the year ending June 30, 1867, and it is as follows:—

	INCOME £	£
Customs	22,000,000	
Internal revenue	55,000,000	
Lands	200,000	
Miscellaneous resources	4,000,000	
		79,200,000
	EXPENDITURE	
Civil service	8,433,118	
Pensions and Indians	3,521,928	
War department	7,803,482	
Navy department	8,796,490	
Interest on public debt	28,308,412	
		56,863,430
Surplus		22,336,570

Supposing all the war taxes kept on, and to yield an augmented income in the now peaceful country with the addition of the

South, and by revised adjustment and improved collection.

Each of these suppositions is, of course, open to discussion and doubt. What the South will become no one in Europe ventures clearly to foretell; all the best of us are dubious—the very best, perhaps, very dubious. How much the income of the country will grow is matter of conjecture, though doubtless it will grow much; and how many taxes, and what sort of taxes, the American democracy will bear, it would be childish now to investigate. Nothing but experience can decide questions so large and so complex as these.

But it is after all upon these questions that the success of Mr. McCulloch's great proposal depends. As to the debt, he proposes to spend on interest and principal 40,000,000/ annually; but he must first get this 40,000,000/. The above accounts no doubt give it him, but will those accounts be verified?

We have no doubt that the United States (if the South goes well) will be amply able to pay 70 or 80,000,000/ of taxation. Their economic position is the best the world has ever seen. The productiveness of their industry is greater than the productiveness of any industry ever was before. The best working race earth has ever known is coming into the greatest opportunity of profitable labour the world has ever afforded. But will it endure to pay so many taxes? Every one must see the grave doubts which beset the subject.

First, sooner or later, the South must come back to Congress, and whatever good effect that return may have socially, it is hardly possible it should have a good effect financially. The South must long be poor; it always was poor in comparison with the North; it produced for export some great staples—one great staple above all—but its self-contained wealth was small. It was not like the wealth of Pennsylvania, or the wealth of New York. But after the great losses of life—of its best lives both for war and production—after the break-up of its whole former system of production—it is impossible that for years the South should be otherwise than very poor. She will pay what she pays with difficulty. And it is hardly possible to doubt that she will pay what she pays with reluctance. She is beaten in war, but it is much to ask her to pay those who overcame her. This debt is greatly held in the New England States, and other warm Union States. But is it possible that the *dis-Union* States should wish to pay such creditors? Their lives are ruined,

their friends and relatives killed, their best property gone, and you ask them for years to come to make such exertions as no nation has ever made in order that the infliction of these calamities may be repaid. No nation has ever yet paid for its own subjugation, and we do not expect the South will begin. Sooner or later its members will come back to Congress—sooner or later they will vote against high taxation.

The West, too, cannot like high taxation. It does not hold near as much of the debt as the Old States in the East. It detests high Customs duties, which cripple foreign trade, which are so much protection to the Eastern manufacturer, which are so much additional difficulty placed in the way of European purchases of what they wish to sell. The West will (as time goes on) object to the easiest part of the taxation—the taxation of imports—because much of their real effect is to take from one section of the United States and to give to another section; to put the money of the Western farmer into the pocket of the Eastern manufacturer; what the Western man buys will be dearer because of the duty, and what he sells to Europe will be less because of the duty. Nor will any State—reasoning upon the assumption that American human nature is like European human nature—be anxious for, agitate for, taxation. A dislike of paying money is one of the most universal parts of man's nature. And an American tax-payer pays money unpleasantly. Their internal Revenue Act is the most excruciating instrument of torture we know. It taxes nearly everything and (we hardly exaggerate) every act, every cognizable act of commercial life. The administration at Washington has discovered its defects. Mr. McCulloch complains of the number of little imposts which yields nothing, but which cost much and harass much,—a Government Commission is sitting to examine the subject and suggest reforms. But no Commission will make 55,000,000/ of excise duties, of internal revenues, at all agreeable,—can render them anything but torments to the commercial and to the consuming community.

Congress, too, is, for the present state of American politics, an untried power. During the war the President was Dictator, and by their President it is in vain to deny that the American people did great things. They found typical men—sufficient but not more than sufficient exponents of the greatness that was in them. But what will their Parliament be? Will that work right in times of calm as their President

worked right in times of storm? No man can answer these doubts, and it is therefore that we state them. When in money matters the data of calculation do not exist, uncertainty is of all things the most prudent.

There are three great forces against high taxation, and there is only one in favour of it. One is (and we are the last to speak lightly of it, though it is not the dry sort of motive which is easily described in our style) the sensibility of a democracy for great ideas. After what has happened, it is impossible to say what Northerners would not do for their union. They have a sentiment about it different from any we feel, different from any which is felt in Europe, but which is inestimably powerful. Mr. McCulloch trades, so to say, on this feeling. He wishes to attract the imaginations of his countrymen by a magnificent finance. He thinks it "poor" to make provision for mere interest. He asks for a large annual reduction of the principal—such a reduction as has never elsewhere been made. This is, doubtless, to English notions showy finance; but if you have to teach the minds of a large, busy, scattered people, a theatricality may be necessary. When all is over, the American debt will be 600,000,000*l*, and (almost all borrowed in four years) they are going to pay 40,000,000*l* a year in interest and principal. These are great figures, whatever comes of them.

We have left ourselves little space to speak of Mr. McCulloch's last burden,—the currency. And yet there is much to be said about it. We can only now strictly indicate how the matter stands, and must return to all details hereafter. The first, the most prominent, and, when examined, most important part of Mr. McCulloch's currency views, reads to an Englishman almost like a jest, or like nonsense. He says the issue of irredeemable currency of greenbacks is part of the "war power." The President is, by Article III. sec. 2 of the Constitution, declared to be "Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States," and this, it seems, gives him power to issue a paper currency. It is what English lawyers would call a "large construction," but still so Mr. McCulloch tells us. And though no legal fiction can be more strained, the principal object, like that of most legal fictions, is good. There must be somewhere a power to do at a great crisis the things needed by that crisis. The United States Constitution did not provide this expressly and by name; it was made under what is

supposed,—but falsely supposed, to be the doctrine of "the English Constitution," under the doctrine of "checks and balances," and in accordance with that doctrine it nails all parts of the State down to a specific task. Each bit of machinery has its own bit of work, but there is no single superlative power. There is no power like with us, an Act of Parliament at a crisis, to break through all cobwebs, and put everything right. But a shrewd observer has said,—“Whatever document an Anglo-Saxon people are compelled to obey, they will find something sensible in it.” The Americans have found a provision for temporary omnipotence in their Constitution, though it would have astonished the makers of that Constitution to know it was there.” This is the "power of the Commander-in-Chief," the "war power." This gives him a right in ancient phrase "to see that the Republic comes to no harm." This power it is that gives the right at a crisis to issue Government notes.

And this alone. Now that the war is over, all the powers of the Constitution return to their defined limits. Each power has certain words in the Constitution which *make* it, and it cannot go beyond them. The only words in the Constitution about the currency are in article I. and section VIII., which gives the Congress power to "coin money and regulate the value thereof," but there is nothing giving authority to *emit* paper there.

The American paper currency is as follows:—

	£
United States notes and fractional currency	. 90,843,000
Notes of National Banks	. 37,000,000
Notes of States Banks	. 13,000,000
	140,843,000

The United States notes are the "greenbacks," the exceptional currency issued, so to say, by right of war. The national banks are a creation of Mr. Chase's. Before the war each State had its currency based on its own laws and its own usages; and the currencies, therefore, were of all sorts and degrees of quality. In New York the notes were well secured; in others they were ill secured. Mr. Chase, acting on the clause which gives the Government power to "regulate the value" of the currency, founded one single currency for the whole Union. He created national banks, whose notes are secured everywhere in the same war, and which were to circulate, and

do circulate, throughout the whole Union. The limit of these national bank notes is 60,000,000/, and they have, therefore, 23,000,000/ more to issue.

Mr. McCulloch boldly proposes to fund the 90,000,000/ of "greenbacks," which will give him between 4,000,000/ and 5,000,000/ more to pay in the way of interest annually *beyond what is allowed in the above accounts*. He will go up to the legal limit of 60,000,000/ of national bank notes, so that he will deal with the entire volume of the currency thus:—

	£
Present currency	140,843,000
Less "greenbacks" retired	90,873,000
	50,000,000
Add national notes remaining to be issued	23,000,000
	73,000,000

which is an immense reduction. The amount, however, is still largely in excess of the old issues before the war. The old issues in 1860 were in round numbers 200,000,000 dols, or 40,000,000/, so that there the present augmentation of paper is enormous, and after every contemplated reduction will be very great.

The true aim of the American reformers of their currency is very clear. They must try with the utmost speed to return to cash payments. There is no security for the equivalence in value of coin and paper, except the interchange of coin and paper at the will of the holder. The holder of the paper is the person who creates that equivalence. If you give him a right to ask for coin for his paper, depend on it the value of the paper will not be less than the value of the coin; at the slightest shade of depreciation, the holder of the paper will demand coin to get the difference. But there is no other check. Fancied limitations of quantity are but conjectural estimates of what a country requires; they contain no self-corrective. It is the power in each noteholder to get gold and silver for his note that enforces the equivalence of that note to gold and silver.

In order to approach specie payments, it is necessary first to reduce the quantity of depreciated currency, and day by day to raise its value; next, to accumulate a reserve of the precious metals, bearing some proportion or being some fixed part (economists differ as to these points) of the actual circulation. But these are great efforts. The creation of an adequate reserve is by far the least difficulty of the two. A de-

preciating paper currency, to use an American phrase, "lubricates the wheels of commerce." Every day the commercial class—the borrowing class—feels its liabilities lightened; it sells its goods for more, and only the same fixed sum goes to its creditors. But an appreciating currency, a currency growing dearer, has the very opposite effect. Every day a merchant sells his goods for less; what comes in is smaller and smaller, but his bills do not diminish; his liabilities are identical. An extra issue of paper is a bounty to the mercantile class, because it is in general a borrower; a contraction of paper is a penalty on the mercantile class, for it takes from them and gives to the lender.

At the very time, therefore, that they are asked to pay unusual taxes, the commercial classes of America will be subject to unusual though most just and necessary pressure. What course will be taken as years go on cannot be foreseen. America, in finance, and in much else, is a "great unknown;" at all events, to others, and in no inconceivable degree to herself. A bolder and grander proposal than Mr. McCulloch's no one ever made; what Congress will decide on it, Congress *en masse*, scarcely one individual of Congress, if one, yet knows.

From the Saturday Review.

NAPOLEON IN MEXICO.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON distinctly announced that he sent his troops to Mexico in order that he might, in his quality of head of the Latin race, prevent the Americans ruling over too large a part of the New World. The occupation of Mexico was a distinct challenge to the Americans, and they are aware that this challenge was only given because they were then too much occupied with their own troubles to be able to notice it. No wonder, therefore, that they resent it, and speak loudly their feelings, now that they are prosperous and powerful. They do not want to go to war with France, but they want to use such language as will make the French withdraw from Mexico without a war being necessary; and what will be the course pursued, under these circumstances, by the Emperor NAPOLEON, is one of the most important secrets that we may expect the new year to reveal to us.

Whatever may be the decision of the Emperor of the FRENCH, the fall of the

Mexican Empire, if it does fall, will probably be due not so much to political causes extraneous to itself as to its own inherent difficulties. If the Mexican Empire were getting on very well, if it were making way in the country, if it were attracting capital and establishing a settled state of society, and if it were beginning to pay its way and get an army of its own, the French might easily retire, and the Americans would scarcely interfere with a happy, peaceful, flourishing community simply because it choose to be governed by a very liberal Emperor. But the Mexican Empire is not getting on well. It does not attract capital; it does not secure the welcome arrival of immigrants; it is not heartily supported by the Mexicans; its revenue does not increase in proportion to the increase of its debt; it cannot enlist a native army on which it can rely. This disappointing result is not due to any one cause. It is not the fault of the Emperor MAXIMILIAN, or of the French, although the EMPEROR may have made mistakes, and the French may have given just grounds of complaint. The evil lies much deeper, for it lies principally in the character of the Mexicans themselves, and in the nature of Mexican climate and soil and geography. The better Mexicans—those who have some settled position and property—support the Empire, because the Empire saves them from having their houses burnt and their throats cut; but their support is purely passive. They do not even talk in favour of the Empire, and they certainly do not act so as to support it. They simply do nothing, and indulge in quiet, querulous censure of all that the EMPEROR does. The mass of Mexicans are utterly incapable of supporting any person or party. They have none of the virtues which prompt men to cohere for common objects. If they are ready to enlist, they are equally ready to desert; if they are ready to be paid for protecting property, they are equally ready to plunder property without pay. They are just so far above the lowest level of humanity that they are able to see how such cries as the Republic or the Church can be used to make their atrocities seem less atrocious. Unless a race superior to any now in Mexico overruns the country, there can be no native government there, for no one can conceive what government means, or what is the use of it. From the outset of his rule the Emperor MAXIMILIAN saw this clearly, and tried to induce emigrants to settle in Mexico, and so to introduce new blood and new ideas. But he has been baffled by two difficulties. In the parts of Mexico where

money might most easily be made, cultivation must be carried on with plenty of capital and labour if it is to be profitable, and the labour does not suit the white man. A man who wishes to grow coffee or sugar or tobacco, or to breed large herds of cattle, must have money to start with; and as he does not expect to labour with his own hands, he must make sure that labour is to be had. In some of the most promising parts of Mexican soil, labour is very scarce; and where labour is to be had, it is not every one who can keep Indians industrious and in good-humour. And to men who could manage these labourers, and who have capital to risk, Mexico is scarcely sufficiently inviting, on account of the great insecurity of life. Then, again, although there are large districts where a European might thrive if he tried to support himself, as emigrants to the States do, by the labour of his own hands, there is no special inducement to such men to choose Mexico which can counterbalance the heavy expense, fatigue, and danger to life of getting there. Poor Europeans will not go to Mexico without money being given them to help them on the journey, and the Mexican Government cannot find the funds for the purpose.

This is the darker side of affairs in Mexico, and it is sombre enough to make the Emperor of the FRENCH to have many doubts as to the expediency of persisting in his attempts to make Mexico what he dreams it might be. There is scarcely sufficient hope of the country prospering under French guidance to make it worth while to persevere; and perhaps a Republic under American protection, and with Americans gradually seizing on the country, would be the best future Mexico could have. Still, it is a great mistake to treat the present aspect of Mexico as if nothing but gloom was to be seen there. The French, and the EMPEROR they have set up, have done much since they were there that is bearing fruit. Mexico has been made something like a European city; it has grown richer, and dared to show its riches. Its material condition is improving. In a few months it will be lighted with gas, and in less than a year a railway a hundred miles long will run out of its gates. The import revenue has already increased, and if a direct internal revenue could be properly adjusted and collected, the Imperial Treasury would not be so empty as it has been. The EMPEROR himself is quite alive to the necessity of keeping intact the public credit, and will fulfil every obligation that it is in his power to meet. The country, though very un-

safe, is free from war; and if, now that the decisive moment is come, the French decide to stay, at all hazards, till their task is complete, and it becomes certain that the Americans will not interfere, the Mexicans will gradually learn to accept a situation from which there is no escape. The Emperor NAPOLEON will be a bold man if he keeps his troops in Mexico, for he is only protracting an effort that may never yield any good result; he will provoke the ceaseless disapprobation of the Americans, and he will be adhering to the one act of his reign which Frenchmen of all ranks and all parties pronounce to be a mistake. But he will also be a bold man if he withdraws his troops, and publicly owns that he has been wrong, or gives his subjects reason to think that he has yielded to threats, and has conceded to fear of the Americans what he would not concede to a desire for the approbation of France.

From the Saturday Review, Dec. 23.

OUR INTERNATIONAL SHORTCOMINGS.

THAT part of the President's Message which refers to England, and to the measures taken by our Government with regard to Confederate cruisers, contains matter for the gravest and most serious reflection, and raises apprehensions to which it would be folly to close our eyes. The President brings a heavy charge against us, and the worst of it is that this charge is more easily stated than answered. After premising that the formal accordance of belligerent rights to the insurgent States was unprecedented, and has not been justified by the issue, and taking care not to allege that the declaration of blockade was not technically a warrant for the counterstep of according these belligerent rights, he goes on to say, what is quite true, that it was only through the action of England that the accordance of these rights made much difference. No one can deny that "British ships, manned by British subjects, and prepared for receiving British armaments, sailed from the ports of Great Britain to make war on American commerce, under the shelter of a commission from the insurgent States." It is also true that these ships, having once escaped from British ports, ever afterwards entered them in every part of the world, to refit, and so to renew their depredations. Further, we unfortunately

cannot deny that this had the effect, to a great extent, of driving the American flag from the sea, and of transferring much of American shipping and American commerce to the very Power whose subjects had created the necessity for such a change. Lord Russell did, in a great measure, rest his defence on the ground that he had been obliged in all the steps he took to consider our municipal law, and the interpretations which English judges and English tribunals had put, or were likely to put, on that law. Further, we refused arbitration, and proposed instead a Commission from the consideration of which the only matters in which the Americans felt any interest should be excluded. All this sounds very bad, and even if we have a defence further than appears in the President's statement, yet we must regret that the *prima facie* case against us is so strong. For the proposal of a Commission there is, we conceive, no defence whatever. It was a pure diplomatic blunder. It was one of those illusory offers which are intended, not to facilitate negotiations, but to throw on the opposing party the onus of rejecting them. To the rest of the case there is a defence which in a great measure would, we hope, be considered by any impartial judge a good defence; but then it is a defence that cannot be put in the telling and concise way in which the accusation against us can be put. Lord Russell, being called on to act, examined how far he had power to act; and, seeing that we and the United States had substantially the same provisions in our municipal systems of law for dealing with such cases, acted in accordance with those provisions, and did exactly what the United States had done when a precisely similar case arose during the war of Portugal with Brazil. Afterwards it was clear that these provisions were ineffectual; and then Lord RUSSELL, no longer taking our municipal law as the measure of our duty as a neutral, boldly invented and enforced a method of preventing the issue of Confederate armed cruisers which was quite illegal, but which was effectual, and satisfied practically the requirements of the Americans. This is substantially our defence. We, in the first instance, did adopt our municipal law as the standard of our duty, because, as it was our law, and as it also had the sanction of being substantially identical with the municipal law of the United States, it might be reasonably supposed to be effectual for its object. When it failed, we no longer treated it as the measure of our duty, but invented a new

system of action which enlarged the measure of our duty very considerably, and practically answered its purpose. This seems to us a good defence, and especially as against the Americans. They, like ourselves, know all the difficulties which beset the Governments of free States when they try to limit the operations of their subjects. They had, and still have, a municipal law for preventing similar damage to belligerents, which our recent experience proves to be ineffectual. They, like Englishmen, know how embarrassing it is for a Government to be called on to take cognizance of everything that happens along a vast line of coast peopled by an enterprising, self-reliant, unscrupulous population. They ought to judge us with all the indulgence which they would certainly have claimed for themselves had our positions been reversed, and had they been the neutrals and we the belligerents.

It is also very difficult to state, in a summary and telling way, the causes why we were justified in refusing arbitration. It seems so fair, so conciliatory, to say, as the PRESIDENT does, that the United States, finding great questions of international law involved in the matter, proposed, in the honest and sincere love of peace and goodwill, to refer the whole case to arbitration. Nor is it certain that an English Minister who had accepted arbitration would have done as wrong as Lord RUSSELL did who declined arbitration, and offered in lieu of it an illusory Commission. But if we are right in the main point—if we took our law as the measure of our duty only until we found it inefficacious, and if we had this excuse for taking it as such measure in the first instance, that the greatest of our sister maritime nations had estimated the measure of its duty in exactly the same way—the only question to refer to arbitration in the case of the *Alabama* was whether we had fulfilled the measure of our duty by doing all that our law allowed us to do. Here arbitration could have been of little good. Admit that, in this first and experimental case, Lord RUSSELL had nothing to do but to lay the facts before the Law Officers, and act as they advised, the real question must then be whether Sir ROUNDELL PALMER looked up his papers fast enough; and as one of the few days during which the papers were before the Law Officers was a Sunday, the issue might turn on the question whether he could have been expected to stay away from church to get up the case of the *Alabama*. The diligence

of particular officials is not a matter on which foreign arbitrators can properly decide. But it must be acknowledged that this does not touch the question whether we could have referred to arbitration the issue as to our being entitled to consider our municipal law the measure of our duty, in the first instance; and Lord RUSSELL ought to have considered this point more closely, and argued it more fully, in his despatch to Mr. ADAMS. All that, however, is past now. The opportunity for obtaining from an arbitration an interpretation of the duty of neutrals is gone by, if we could ever have availed ourselves of it; and it would be exceedingly satisfactory if we could see now any means of establishing such rules for the future as would relieve us, and every other maritime nation, from the dread of seeing commerce preyed on by such vessels as the *Alabama*. The best way, undoubtedly, would be to promote the assembling of a Maritime Congress, at which every danger to belligerents and neutrals from the escape of such cruisers should be discussed. But, after reading the PRESIDENT'S Message, we have little hope that a Congress could be got to meet for their discussion. The line which the Americans are inclined to take is very obvious. They say that they do not want to dispute any more with us, or to quarrel or make claims; but they will wait till we are at war, and then we shall find out by our own experience what it is to suffer as they have suffered. And if the Americans will not help us to call a Congress, we may be sure that France will not. The Emperor has too keen a recollection of the slight which, as he thinks, we put on him by refusing the Congress which he proposed, to do for us what we declined to do for him.

England, therefore, if she acts at all, must act for herself and by herself. Of course, if she takes any measures for the security of commerce now which she did not take when the American war was going on, it will be said that she is acting from fear, and from a mere selfish desire to avert from herself the injuries she has entailed on others. The Americans would be certain to say this, and would give us to understand that our repentance came too late. But that may not be a sufficient reason for not doing all that we can to be in the right; and even if considerable caution must be used in devising and proposing any changes, it can never be amiss to consider what salutary changes we might effect. Many changes have been proposed that

would not be at all salutary, and views have been propounded of our duty as neutrals that would, if adopted, place us at the mercy of any belligerent who might call on us to carry them into practice. But some changes more or less effectual and beneficial, might be made. In the first place, as our existing law does not express the measure of our duty as neutrals, and as our Government, in order to fulfil that measure, was forced to defy and infringe our law, we might profit by our experience, and bring our law up to the proper standard. We might give our Government the power to deal with all vessels of war in construction, as they dealt with Mr. LAIRD's steam-rams. And, in the next place, it deserves consideration whether we might not borrow a lesson from the PRESIDENT's remark that we greatly aggravated the injury caused by the escape of the *Alabama* and her sister cruisers when we allowed them to come into British ports to refit. Need we do this for the future? The Spanish Government, immediately on hearing of the war with Chili, announced that, if a Spanish vessel of war captured any ship bearing a Chilian commission, but which had not issued from a Chilian port, it would treat the crew as pirates, which is a confused and technical periphrasis for hanging them. The only reason why a belligerent should not take this course is that he lays himself open to reprisals; and the Chilians might reply that, if this were done, and a Chilian man-of-war ever captured a Spanish vessel, the whole of the captured crew should be hanged in retaliation. It is for the belligerent to decide whether he likes to take this risk. But a neutral might perhaps say that no vessel of war of either belligerent should enter any of the harbours of the neutral unless it had issued from the port of the belligerent having already been invested with a military character. All that the neutral would have to do would be to refuse shelter, and this he might do probably without accepting any burden of duty that he was not able to bear. The next time that a great war arises, if England is happily a neutral, it may be worth while that she should announce at the outset that this will be the principle by which she will be guided in the reception of belligerent cruisers.

From the Spectator.

MORAL CONTAGION.

If it be true, as we believe it is, that Mr. Eyre, naturally a brave and just, though

weakly obstinate, and dictatorial man, has succumbed to the intense feeling of race-hatred and race-suspicion which alienates the white colonists of Jamaica from the descendants of their former slaves, it is only a remarkable illustration of the highly contagious character of certain moral disorders to which we are all liable. The close analogies which exist between physical and moral organisms are really very remarkable. In both alike we find that the most hopeless kinds of disease are seldom contagious, though not unfrequently hereditary; in both alike we find many of the most fatal diseases, — that is, of those which, though seldom hopeless, attack and frequently destroy multitudes in a very short time, what our Registrar-General calls the zymotic class, — to be exceedingly temporary in their nature, and if survived at all, scarcely likely to leave the constitution weaker for the attack. Cancer, consumption, scrofula, none of them contagious, all of them slow in their approaches, all of them hereditary, resemble the mental diseases which arise from organic taints in the will, or what in some cases is equivalent, deficiency in healthy social impulse caused by predominance of will. No moral disorder is more hereditary than a consuming pride (closely allied to insanity), which we may call an isolating will-disease; it is pride in great measure which has sapped the strength of the Ottoman race and insulated it in a sort of lonely and fatalistic despair. Pride in its intensest forms may be called moral consumption, and is curiously allied with certain forms of unnatural cruelty, impurity, and sin, which may be called moral scrofula, disorders which so far from being infectious, destroy by their very tendency to evade that social influence which, once brought to bear on them, would extinguish them immediately. And yet no kinds of vices are more distinctly hereditary than these unnatural forms of cruelty, these secret vices of proud natures. Again, the contagious physical diseases which trouble children so much, and are usually dangerous only to youthful blood and overflowing vitality, usually diseases of the skin, have their analogue in the social vices which, though often of the same class as the unsocial, — vices of cruelty, for instance, as between race and race, vices of profligacy which are so catching in Universities and any large associations of young men, — have always in them something absolutely distinct in kind from the deeper, unsocial, more hopeless organic diseases which are hereditary, but not contagious. As a rule, we believe the conta-

gious mental diseases do not originate in the will, but in the sympathies and the social emotions, and only overpower the will through its weakness; while the deeper-rooted organic diseases originate in the centre of our individuality — the will, and creep like a cancer thence to the more superficial portions of our nature.

But if this were true, then it would seem to follow that men of strong wills and weak social impulses would be less liable to moral contagion than men of weak will and strong social impulses; and almost all women, who though less generally social than men, are far more closely bound up with the few nearest and dearest to them than men themselves, — would be more so. But how would this apply to the illustration of moral contagion with which we set out? Mr. Eyre is unquestionably a man in some sense of more than strong will, of irresistible obstinacy, and there is nothing to show that he is a man of strong social impulses; what is known of him seems rather to imply an insulated man. We believe the explanation in his case would prove that it is not so much his general liability to infection, as his liability to infection in this particular case, which has caused this fatal attack of the prevalent disease. We know that in the case of all infectious physical diseases there is something, extremely difficult to analyze, called predisposing causes. It is by no means universally true that mere delicacy is a predisposing cause. In one visitation of a great epidemic it has been remarked that all the weakly and sickly persons came off with no ill result, while the strongest and healthiest fell at the first touch. Again, at other times these diseases wither all the sickly plants at once, and leave the healthy ones comparatively uninjured. So it is with moral infections. There are not only generally predisposing causes to catching the contagion, such as strong social impulses, weak will, and an early education adapted to receive the poison instead of to repel it, — but *special* predisposing causes, such as the tendency of the alarm, when it arises, to lend strength and justification to deep-seated currents of purpose already excited in the mind. So far as it is at present possible to judge, this would be Mr. Eyre's case. He was not a timid man, and not originally liable to the feeling of race-hatred and caste-privilege. Had he been in Jamaica as a mere observer, as one of the people unidentified with any part in the political struggle which had been going on, he would probably have never taken the

infection of the anti-negro passion which has burst out there so violently, — nay, might have done much to stem the tide of impetuous feeling. But it seems that he had been engaged in a vehement political quarrel with the party commonly called the negro party in the Assembly, about many local matters of expenditure as well as general policy, — and the naturally tenacious spirit of the man's purposes rendered him peculiarly open to the infection of any hostile feeling running directly against this party. We do not of course mean to imply that Mr. Eyre *used* a passion he did not share for his own purposes. That would be the most shocking of all wickednesses. The whole purport of our remarks is to show that he *did* catch the infection from a special predisposing cause, — the ready and rapid conducting medium supplied to him by the intensity of his own indignation against the party which was resisting as he thought the wise and salutary exercise of his authority in the island. If you are already angry with anybody, you must be very impartial indeed not to believe far more easily what others have to say against him than you would do if no such anger had ever been excited. Mr. Eyre was certainly very angry with the Gordon party in the assembly before these troubles began and the planter panic broke out, and this anger was apparently the special predisposing cause which rendered him liable to an infection he would not otherwise have taken. It is nothing more than an individual illustration of the ordinary remark on the greater liability to be deceived by fallacious reasoning displayed by an audience who agree heartily with an orator's practical ends, than is displayed by an audience who are indifferent to the ends which he tries to promote, and judge his reasoning therefore simply by its reasonableness. Convoke an assembly to promote reform, or the abolition of slavery, or anything else, and the weakest arguments will excite even enthusiasm in an audience that goes heart and soul with the drift of the speaker, when they would excite contempt in those who are convinced that he is wrong. In precisely the same way the spread of a moral infection must depend very much on its finding a state of feeling identical in drift, though not in origin, with the state of feeling it would promote. This is of course the true reason of the highly contagious character of bad sentimental morality — in French novels or elsewhere. It is not the depth of the sentiment itself, but the high-

ly conducting medium of the passions it finds ready to its purpose, which renders so feeble a poison dangerous.

If, as we have ventured to suggest, the region of infectious diseases is usually the social emotions and sympathies — those which bind classes and nations together, and so propagate either false morality or false sentiment almost with as little free choice among the individuals as there is in the meal as to whether it shall or shall not be leavened by the yeast, — then it would follow that the great disinfectant must be solitary judgment, — that habit of mind which habitually interposes a kind of minute capillary repulsion between the pressure of social influences and the attitude of its own secret thought, — which clears a space, as it were, like a juggler with his balls in a crowd, round the will, into which it will not admit the pressure of social influences till it has given its sanction to their tendency. Such a habit of mind would really operate to save society from false corporate judgments, much as the cellular system of building iron vessels operates to save a ship from the disastrous effects of leakage. As it is, when a moral accident happens to the social nature of influential persons in any closely organized city the bad results are never isolated, and sometimes extend so rapidly that the whole ship founders. But if the ship is built of non-communicating cells, one cell may fill and all the others remain as water-tight as before. It is true, as we have admitted, that the worst social vices, — even social cruelty and impurity, — are seldom so utterly destructive of the soul as the organic tendencies to disease *originating* in a perverted will, which, though often hereditary, are never very contagious. Yet a French or Jamaica reign of terror destroys the souls as well as bodies of multitudes, and steels by cruel wrongs the souls of multitudes whom it does not destroy. A perverted and evil-enthusiasm is as terrible a force as any which does not imply absolutely the constitutional exhaustion of a great community. Nor are men less in need of the disinfectant we have mentioned who apparently, like Mr. Eyre, are not naturally liable to be affected vehemently by social influences, if they permit special conductors, such as political hostility, to open the gates of their minds to besieging influences which, acting alone, would have had no chance of triumph.

From the Spectator 30th Dec.

LES ETATS-UNIS PENDANT LA GUERRE.*

It is a curious, to an Englishman an unpleasantly suggestive, fact that the best work ever written on America should have had a Frenchman for its author. Upon the absolute merits of De Tocqueville as a political observer opinions may differ, but there can be no question that on the whole his work is the ablest and most exhaustive which has yet been published concerning America. As a rule, French treatises on American affairs have been infinitely fairer and more impartial than those which have proceeded from English authors. Yet it is very hard to conceive at first how this should be the case. We all know by experience how difficult, if not impossible, it is for a Frenchman really to understand English character, or institutions, or politics; and it is not easy to see how the mere fact of crossing the Atlantic should give a Frenchman an appreciation of the Anglo-Saxon nature of which he is utterly devoid in the Old World of Europe. There is a story told of Kant, that on his death-bed he said: — "Nobody can explain my philosophy except Hegel, and he cannot understand it." In much the same way we should say that nobody but Englishmen can explain America, and that they cannot understand it. If English writers about the model Republic could ever realize the simple fact that Americans are Englishmen, with all our national virtues and vices, strength and weakness, energies and failings, differing from us only in the different conditions of their lives, they would be able to understand America in a way no foreigner, or certainly no Frenchman, can ever hope to do. As, however, no amount of experience or observation ever seems able to persuade Englishmen of this patent fact, they never can give any estimate of America which does not err on one side or the other. Owing to this fact French writers on American subjects have a great advantage over English ones. They do not see as much as the latter, but what they do see they see it in its natural light. The minor differences of customs and manners which strike Englishmen so much are not perceptible to foreign observers. To a writer like Mr. Russell, or Mr. Sala, or

* *Les Etats-Unis pendant la Guerre.* By Auguste Laugel. Paris: Baillière.

even Mr. Trollope, it seems a serious matter that an English-speaking man should say "I guess" instead of "I expect," or should pronounce "do" "du," or should wear white-kid gloves in the day-time, or should commit any other of the solecisms whose commission in England would argue a certain want of knowledge of the habits of genteel society. To a Frenchman these sort of criticisms, with which the works of English tourists are filled, never suggest themselves. His very ignorance of English habits of thought and society preserve him from the fatal error of attaching undue importance to incidental features in American life which have nothing to do with its real essence and character.

M. Laugel is in many respects a very favourable specimen of a French tourist. Connected, we believe, with America by family relations, and intimately acquainted with our English language, and life, and literature, he united to a very great extent the opposite advantages of a French and an English observer. Having resided for some time in America in the closing year of the war, he has published a series of recollections of his Transatlantic experiences, which are well worth the study of anybody who wishes to understand the real aspect of that great country. Like most educated French Liberals, M. Laugel was throughout the war a strong supporter of the Northern cause. Several of the chapters of his book were published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* at different periods during the last three years, and to re-read these now is to an Englishman curious enough. At the very time when our own public writers ridiculed and laughed at the notion that the North could possibly defeat the South, or that the Union could ever be restored, this French essayist treated the triumph of the Federals, the restoration of the Union, the present out-turn in fact of the war, as a matter of certainty; and this not because he had any superior channel of information, not because he was an impassioned partisan, but because he was cool enough to look facts in the face, and because, we are afraid we must add, he had more faith in freedom than we showed ourselves. With the clear, incisive logic of a French intellect, he saw at once that slavery was the real cause of the war, and perceiving this, he found no difficulty in understanding the nature of the struggle. "It cannot," he says, "be fairly asserted that the crisis we have just witnessed was the natural result of the application of those democratic ideas which triumphed on the American conti-

nent towards the close of the last century. It may be asserted confidently that the war would never have broken out if class privileges, under their most unjust and cruel form, had not been surreptitiously introduced into the laws and society of the Union,—into the laws by the constitutional protection afforded to slavery,—into society by that prejudice of race which is so terrible an obstacle to the emancipation of the blacks. . . . What can you say of a social system where, in the midst of the most absolute equality, there existed a privileged class, founded neither on merit, nor on education, nor on distinguished services, nor even on wealth, but only on a certain description of property, that in human beings? This fatal antagonism of slavery and freedom is the key to all the political and social history of the United States."

M. Laugel was in America during the Presidential election, and his account of the fundamental questions at issue between Mr. Lincoln and McClellan is the clearest we have yet seen. He utterly denies the assertion so commonly made at the time in England, that the Democratic party was in favour of making peace with the South. The only difference in his opinion between the two parties was that while the Democrats proposed to restore the Union by guaranteeing the South the possession of their "peculiar institutions," the Republicans proposed to restore the Union and abolish slavery. Of all the many estimates of Abraham Lincoln's character, M. Laugel's seems to us the most philosophical we have met with. No doubt the portrait given of him in these pages is in some degree an exaggerated one. The humour of the man, the honesty, the ignorance, the shrewd mother-wit; the mental hesitation till the final conclusion was arrived at, and the dogged courage with which that resolution was adhered to; the mixture of fanaticism with a kindly cynicism, were all too characteristic of our strange Anglo-Saxon nature for any one not belonging to our race to understand thoroughly. One feature, however, of Mr. Lincoln's character, the influence which his life in the West had produced upon him, is brought out by M. Laugel with great power and acuteness. "It so happened," he says with truth, "that the one dominant and almost only passion of Abraham Lincoln's nature was the passion of the nation. I ought perhaps not to use the word passion to express a resolute, calm, inflexible conviction, a sort of innate and inborn faith in the destiny of the American people. In no part of the Union has the

national sentiment entered so deeply into the souls of Americans as amidst the populations which live beyond the Alleghanies. The inhabitant of Massachusetts may well be proud of the history of his little State. Most of the sea-board States have traditions and memories of their own, but Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois have as yet no history. The citizen of these vast territories, which he feels are called to such high destinies, is above all an *American*; he is, he means to remain, the citizen of a great country; he is determined to measure the greatness of his country by the magnitude of the States he inhabits, and his patriotism knows literally no bounds."

Of the feeling thus depicted Mr. Lincoln was undoubtedly a worthy representative, and no small portion of his strength was due to the fact that he knew and sympathised with the depth of the passion for the Union which prevails in the West. In the course of years Western men may come to have the same feelings towards their own States as are entertained by the citizens of Massachusetts or Maryland; but in the West the States as yet exist simply as geographical expressions. Even the most ardent patriot cannot be enthusiastic about the allotment of prairie land out of which his State has been formed within the memory of men still young, and therefore if the Western settler has any patriotism in him it is given undivided to the Union.

The reader who wants to learn how Yankees gobble down their food, or neglect the use of spittoons, or liquor up at bars, had better not turn to M. Laugel's pages. Strange to say, he omits almost all mention of these and similar topics, which form the staple of ordinary Anglo-American books of travel. But those who wish for a great deal of very valuable information about the Western States, told very pleasantly, cannot do better than read the record of M. Laugel's travels. The grotesque side of American men and manners and cities has been described so often that it is a chance to meet with a writer who tries to understand and explain their real character. Here, for instance, is a remark on the monster hotels of the West which throws a new light on these institutions:—

"The hotel, like the political meeting, is at once an opportunity for and an occasion of social intercourse; life is too busy in the West for those social relations which require leisure, which demand a disinterested taste for abstract things, a half serious, half frivolous eagerness in the pursuit of some conventional ideal. Democratic roughness

ignores or despises shades, and degrees, and classifications; in the middle of so many equals a man feels himself in truth alone. Everybody has his home, where he shuts himself up with his wife and children; but at his hotel the American sees new faces, he hears other things talked about besides his own business; he learns to love order, cleanliness, luxury, large and spacious rooms; he forms his manners on those of the strangers he meets with there; he watches the movements, listens to the smallest words, of the celebrated personages, generals, statesmen, orators, or writers, whom chance has placed beside him for the day. Amidst this continual flood of new comers, amongst so many strange faces, he learns the greatness of his country more fully than by studying an atlas. If he cannot visit every State, every State in turn comes to visit him. His horizon extends itself, and from the centre of his vast continent he turns his gaze to the shores of the Atlantic, to the Gulf of Mexico, to the valleys of California. The hotel is in fact an epitome of the Union."

The theory thus exposed may be true or not, but at any rate it seems to us better worth studying than an account of how many times the traveller had to ring before he could get buttered toast for breakfast, or of how many dishes the lady seated next him at dinner composed her request. We have enough, and more than enough, of comic American tourists, and we are glad to find one M. Laugel who is serious without being dull.

From the Spectator.

CITOYENNE JACQUELINE.*

THE conception of condensing the Great French Revolution into a novel concerning an individual woman's lot must seem at first sight almost as bold as that of condensing the lightning into a conductor of individual messages, or compelling the ocean to carry a single boat wherever its owners will. There is a largeness in the machinery which seems too great for the individual purpose to which it is applied, and perhaps the artistic enterprise is really bolder than the scientific, for if you undertake to paint "a woman's lot in the Great French Revolution,"

* *Citoyenne Jacqueline: a Woman's Lot in the Great French Revolution.* By Sarah Tytler. 3 vols. London: Stahan.

there is always the same difficulty that the figure-painter has in dealing with a too magnificent landscape as his background, — the fear lest either the individual figures be lost in the grandeur of the scene, or the grand features of the scene be dwarfed or distorted in order to give sufficient prominence to the individual figures. Miss Tytler has felt this difficulty, and there are perhaps here and there in this beautiful and finished story chapters in which the historic picture of the events of the time is a little too extended. But on the whole she has surmounted it with great success, — the rather that she specially excels in that grouping and colouring of country and city pictures which in a great degree supersedes the necessity of little *résumés* of events by letting the course of events indicate itself in the gossip of humble persons. At all events the interest of the individual tale is never absorbed in the interest of the great tragedy, and again, we are never in danger of forgetting that that tragedy was made up of thousands and thousands of similar individual trials, as the sea itself is but an aggregate of waves.

Not only is the tale one of deep interest, and of great pictorial power in reference to the scenery and the society it depicts, but it is long since we have read any in which the sketches of character — all for the most part slight — are more delicately outlined or sustained with more uniform skill. Miss Tytler is fair to every class, and has given us good instead of bad specimens of almost all the classes engaged in the Great Revolution without concealing the radical weakness and selfishness which undermined their strength. The sketch of the Baron and Baronne de Faye, of their full-dress manners and highly preserved etiquettes in the dull little Tour de Faye, Monsieur going every evening between five and six to kiss Madame's hand and play cards with her and her daughter till supper was served, and of the genuinely high-bred courage, the gallantry of heart that still lingered under this stiff moral brocade in both the Baron and his wife, is graphic, and at least like truth, if, from want of any intimate knowledge of the old French *noblesse*, we cannot properly assert that it is true. The young lady and heroine, Jacqueline Demoiselle de Faye, is, as young ladies and heroines are apt to be, less definite, and perhaps Miss Tytler's least successful character. But even in her the youthful enthusiasm for the nation, the true disinterestedness and nobility of mind before she abandons her own class, and again, the technical nobility of

caste which asserts itself in her after marriage with her father's steward, the registrar of Faye, — are finely drawn, and the contrast between her real refinement and the artificial refinement of the brilliant Madame de Croi, who carries off her lover from her, is thoroughly artistic. Madame de Croi is a girl little older than herself, also of a noble family, who had married a rich old *bourgeois* for his money (afterwards confiscated), and was left a widow while yet in her teens. She has culture and brilliancy, but has none of the noble ideas which just redeemed some few among the higher aristocracy of old France. One of the best touches in the book is that soliloquy in which the Baroness de Faye contrasts the artificial brilliancy of Madame de Croi with the nobility of her own daughter's nature, much as she affects to despise its deeper and more enthusiastic side: —

"There was one person, and only one, present who formed a more correct estimate than her circle of the conflicting claims of Jacqueline and Petronille. It was not Babette; for although she loved her young mistress dearly, and ground her strong white teeth at this issue, she too regarded Madame de Croi as by far the finer woman — very nearly as fine as the lady in the caravan from Alsace. Was it wonderful that the judge who decided in Jacqueline's favour — not out of partiality, but in good faith — was Madame de Faye? Monsieur the Baron might have his doubts, bewildered and dazzled as men are liable to be; Madame had none. 'What does the woman fear for?' she began her reflections deliberately, apostrophizing Madame de Lussac. 'Her own paltry spark of a life? It does not merit the trouble of being blown out, any more than that of her reader, Mademoiselle Troche. They will soon go out of themselves, poor women! if the people will only have patience. She might have more to think of. What! a daughter born a Lussac, by marriage a Croi, and with a taint that is cousin-german to vulgarity! Nevertheless it is so. My Jacqueline is an awkward, unformed child, who may be anything yet. The worst is, she will believe in the whole world and embroil herself with it, like a saint in the middle ages. But in that there is not a shade of vulgarity. Petronille de Croi is like a financier's daughter: she seeks to shine, she struggles to rule. Ah! how low that is! She is a liar, in look and act, in assuming the tournure and costume of the old *régime*. We others governed because we could not help it. We ruled without effort or design. We scorned to conceal our worst sins. We were grand dames to the last. For you, my Chevalier, I can follow your game. Petronille de Croi's dot will maintain you in exile now that Jacqueline de Faye's domain is destined beyond remedy to confiscation. Good. Petronille's heart is also favourable to you, for

you will prove a better chevalier than the Marquis to conduct her to England, and thus prevent hazard and *ennui*. She may marry you. Ah! well, I forgive you, my cousin. Every man must have care for himself, and the very Chapter of the Knights of Malta is dissolved. I forgive you for everything but being actually light-headed for this Petronille's smile and favour. Chut! I hear the creaking of the joints of the young woman's mind. But men have thick heads and dull brains. They cannot always tell the pewter from the silver, or see that peacocks are not birds of paradise. They have a shade of vulgarity themselves. We are otherwise."

There seems to us real genius in this passage. The aristocracy of self-reliant serenity looking down on the glitter of mere clever effort, and saying to itself, with French vivacity, "Chut! I hear the creaking of the joints of the young woman's mind!" is a touch worthy of any novelist however great. But if Miss Tytler is thoroughly fair to the greater qualities even of the effete aristocracy wiped out by the Revolution, she is more than fair to the qualities of the class which superseded, and deserved to supersede, them in the rural districts. In the innkeeper of Faye and her son, La Sarte and Michel, we have a fine picture of the noblest qualities which are needed to form the nucleus of a healthy and simple society, without any sort of idealism or Arcadian extravagance. La Sarte, with all her depth of faith and pride of simplicity, is no angel, and cannot easily bear to renounce the influence she has exercised as a wealthy innkeeper in a poor village, nor can she bend to offer voluntarily any sympathy to the Demoiselle de Faye in the sacrifices which the latter takes upon herself when she enters a sphere beneath her own, and becomes her daughter-in-law. The picture of La Sarte ignoring all the confusion which her unpractised and unhappy daughter-in-law introduces into the village inn by her ignorance and negligence, rather than volunteer her help and sympathy, much as she loves to counsel and reprove those who spontaneously come to her for advice, is as well conceived as is her proud injunction to her favourite son, the Girondist deputy for Faye, to put a stop to the bloodshed of the Convention, when he and his party had in fact fallen from power and were just about to suffer for their comparative moderation. The sketch, slight though it be, of the intrinsic nobility and consequent serenity in these plebeians of the Sarte family, of the far deeper root which this moral nobility has in them than any which the hereditary rank

of Monsieur and Madame de Faye could strike into the thin soil of the old aristocratic ideas, combined as it is with a very graphic picture of the peculiar, and so to say frosted, charm, which a long hereditary serenity and the comparatively artificial sentiment of 'noblesse oblige' give to the manners of Monsieur and Madame, is subtle and very effective. Nor is the sketch of the kindly *bourgeois* family at Paris, the rich mercer Durand and his people, so far inferior in true nobility even to the statelier peasantry owing to a certain want of fixity of status and simplicity of position, less striking. The pompous and good-natured father, with his pompous republican ferocity, his shopkeeper's thrift, shopkeeper's vanity, and personal kindliness; the pretty daughter, Felicité, who is not exactly a flirt, but so much dislikes to give pain that she cannot throw off either of two men who love her, and does her best to satisfy both; the neglected and eccentric little romp Olympe, with her girlish passion for her sister's lover and the disablerie which great talents and high spirits kept down by repressive neglect is almost sure to inspire in young French girls, are all outlined with a masterly hand.

All these sketches are fine, and not less so are the general and still slighter sketches of revolutionary life in the provinces and in Paris. The various village characters of the hamlet of Faye are especially happy, and even to the worst of all, the village butcher Sylvain, with his deep melancholy eyes and insatiable thirst for the bloodiest gratifications of revolutionary ferocity, the author does not deny that touch of human nature which renders him conceivable as a man as well as a demon. We must give one specimen of Miss Tytler's village conversations. The Revolution is at its darkest, and the hamlet of Faye, its church gutted and closed, worship and mass forbidden, and tenth days substituted for the Sunday, does not find itself happier for the reign of Reason:—

"Next day an old woman, with her distaff in the bosom of her gown, went along spinning, and driving her red cow before her, from the banks of the Mousse, where, by dint of great assiduity, it had managed to get a few wisps or blades. She looked up, and began to wag her head gravely, as she approached the churchyard gate. It was closed, but clearly not for the preservation of property. The crosses were pulled up and broken into fragments, like the woodwork of the little church close by, and neither white ribands nor immortelles rested on the grave of virgin or patriarch. Over the gate was painted, in big, staring, white letters,

'Death is an everlasting sleep.' Here was the explanation of the shut door. The old woman was very old, and brown, and shrivelled. To all appearance it could not be long ere she slept her everlasting sleep. The idea, however, seemed to fill her with lively dissatisfaction. A second and younger woman, noticing the first, walked down the street and joined her. The two stood still at the locked gate, while the red cow went discreetly on to quench its thirst at the fountain trough. — 'A fine thing now,' said the older woman, 'after me and my old man have lived together these forty years, to tell us that when our time comes we are to fall asleep and not even dream of each other, — bah!' — 'And my little son Alex,' replied the younger, 'who was drawn for the army, and has marched to the ends of the earth, and who may be shot passing through some hedge and die in a ditch — they will tell me he will have gone to sleep and will have no awaking. I need not care to go to sleep, for I shall have no awaking either; and I suppose they would say I need not pray, because God is also asleep!' — 'Death! if that were the case, what would the common people do?' — 'For that matter, what would the great people do?' — 'Ah! the great people have had their day, and now it is their night; the holy saints help them! I hear them no spite, poor souls! But my faith! if they call this liberty, when they do not give us the liberty of another world, I would like better to want their liberty, I would!' — 'The salt tax and roadmaking were not half so bad, not even purgatory and the dread of hell itself.' — 'No indeed! They still left us heaven, and the good God, and our Lord and Saviour, the Virgin and the Saints, to interpose for us. One never knew where a blessing might not come from. But this sleep, it crushes us like lead.' — 'La Jullienne takes on worst of all for her baby. They say she will go mad if something is not done.' — 'Go! she was always a lunatic, La Jullienne. What is her baby, which lay in her bosom for only a year, to my man, who has driven the cow there — the prodigal beast! — with me, and helped to milk her too, and dug, and thrashed, and ate, and drank, and prayed with me for nearly half a century?' — 'Or to my little son, who kept the vintage so well, and was affianced to the good Jeanneton, the best girl in Faye. Oh! well, it is hard; but for mother Jullienne, — fy! do not speak of her in comparison.' — 'La Sarte used to say, every one's trial was the worst trial to that man or woman.' — 'La Sarte knows; she is a wise woman. I esteem La Sarte; I wish her good luck of her stay in Paris with her son, the famous deputy. But La Sarte did not live with her man for forty-seven years. Father Sarte died when the famous deputy was a baby himself, I remember. The honest man departed on the *fête* of St. Hilaire. Ouf! I forget there is no St. Hilaire; there is nothing but the sun yonder, and he goes to bed in his turn. They hold up that sleep as if it were a blessing. I don't want to sleep unless I am to awake again. Though I do have the rheumatism, I can bear it; for there are many things

beautiful here, if only folk did not tell us lies.' . . . 'But look you, there comes Mother Jullienne, whose son was only a little child.' — 'The old gadding slattern of the hamlet was a sorry sight. Not only were her arms empty of the meagre child, but they were tossing distractedly about her head, from which she had torn her cap, together with handfuls of her grizzled hair. The bones were staring at each other above her hollow cheeks, and her ferret eyes were glazed and wild. — 'Why does that great beast Jullien not take up my child and give him consecrated burial?' she raged, in a hoarse voice. — 'But Jullien is so swollen he cannot dig. I will rather scratch away the earth with my nails.' — 'Softly, softly, La Jullienne, the child rests under the shadow of the church. There is no better grave in France now,' said Mother Beaujeu. — 'And he was but a little thing,' added the other woman, grudgingly preoccupied with her own trial; 'he had not worked for you, nor even spoken to you.' — 'Silence! or I strike you,' screeched Mother Jullienne. — 'What do you know of it, wife of Huc the younger — you whose Alex was idle many a time, and was turned back from his confirmation for killing quails when he should have been ringing the bells? Or you, Mother Beaujeu, whose old Simon is like a crab apple, and you and he spit at each other like cats? Ah! I have seen you, Mother Beaujeu, yoked side by side with an ox, and even an old grey ass, and your man driving you. No wonder you bray! You two would be well at ease to have your plagues sleeping for ever, and so would the whole world, for that. But my innocent little child, what do I know but that if he had lived he might have been a great farmer, buying up the lands, like Maitre Michel? And now that he is dead, to be told that he will never wake up again, — I tell you it makes me mad.' "

The whole novel is rather a sketch than a painting, its outlines delicately touched, the stir and tempest in the air and sky faithfully rendered, the hope and the despair gleaming like stormy sunlight or forked lightning over the individual characters, expression never wanting, but no single nature sounded even to such depths as fiction, in skilful hands like Miss Tyler's, might safely go. Still every stroke in the sketch is refined, and almost every stroke tells. It is a story that not only interests us in the perusal, but that interests us still more in turning over the leaves a second and a third time, to catch the touches which we had missed in the first interest of the tale. There is vivacity as well as perfect clearness in the style, pathos that speaks *through* the sense of beauty, and therefore shows no strain or effort in its sentiment, and a depth of insight into all forms of enthusiasm, even when distorted into the foulest cruelty, which

renders the picture of those almost incredible times not only more distinct, but less incredible and less poignantly painful than they are wont to seem. The French Revolution is apt to look to modern readers more like a chapter out of the Apocalypse than out of human history. And Mr. Carlyle, by his wonderful gorgeousness of colouring and cloudiness of outline, has rather strengthened than weakened the impression. The pictures of this story, while they give even a keener sense of the unrighteousness and lust which were at the source of the Revolution, seem to justify it to history better than all Mr. Carlyle's opulence of pictorial insight, by showing how its fires tempered the true steel in all classes of natures, patrician or plebeian, high or low.

From the Spectator.

NERVES AND NERVE.

THE new sixpenny magazine, the *Argosy*, has amongst several other clever papers one of great humour by Mr. Matthew Browne in favour of nerves. This gentleman is much hurt at the ordinary disparagement of nerves. He remarks that while we have all heard of muscular Christians, no one has ever yet heard of nervous Christians, though nerves have certainly much more to do with spiritual emotions than muscles. Nerves even come off badly as compared with adipose tissue. "Prophetic denunciations against such as be fat in Zion are on record; none against such as be nervous. Yet the fat man is tolerated, loved, at worst laughed at, while the nervous man is not only laughed at,—he is disliked." Nevertheless, asks Mr. Browne, "were the Martyrs fat? Is Mr. John Stuart Mill fat? Is Mr. Gladstone fat? No, the nation would not trust its income with a fat man,—it knows better." Certainly Mr. Gladstone is nervous, if not exactly, as we shall see presently, in Mr. Matthew Browne's sense of that term. Mr. Browne goes on to enforce with much humour the shameful libels often published against the nerves even by physicians,—as, for example, by Dr. Trotter, of Bath, whose idea of a nervous person is a person who has "the wind," who suffers from *borb-igmi*, and has other "ignominious symptoms not to be particularized." Mr. Browne's own definition of nervous-

ness appears to be the possession of fine senses, fine perceptions, and fine sensations, especially the former,—and he accuses the human race in general which speaks opprobriously of the nerves, and has no nerves of its own, of being distinguished by three characteristics,—(1) it never knows when a thing is going to happen; (2) it never knows when a thing is happening; (3) it never remembers a thing when it has happened;—from all which characteristics Mr. Matthew Browne deduces with some triumph that it is much better to be nervous than not.

And no doubt if being nervous means having plenty of special and trustworthy reports from the universe of what is going on there, or is likely to go on there, or has gone on there, it is as much better to be nervous than unnervous as it is better to see than to be blind, to hear than to be deaf, to feel than to be destitute of the sense of touch. But how if having nerves involves a special but untrustworthy report of past, present, or future, or even a special but purely fictitious report of the same? If nervousness imply merely a superior system of telegraphic communication with the mind, well and good. But suppose it means a nervous organization about as useful as "the overland telegraph from Galle," and implies the constant receipt of such scraps of information from the external world as this, received on Wednesday:—"Question United States Treaty tin latms Pashiaky worse," or of highly exciting but completely imaginary facts, like that from the Crimea about the Tartar who had ridden seven hundred miles to bring word of the fall of Sebastopol about a year before that event happened. Would the frequent arrival in the mind of intimations of either of these valuable species be an advantage to any one? and yet no one who knows what 'nerves' are, will doubt that they do very frequently involve the receipt by the mind of exceedingly unintelligible and dismal messages, ushered in with great pomp of seeming import, like "tim latms Pashiaky worse;"—or that, more unpleasant and disturbing still, the little mental bell will ring convulsively in the mind of a person with nerves, to call attention to the arrival of a message from the external world which does not arrive at all. The pale imagination watches the bell vibrating convulsively, like bell's ringing in an empty house which are pulled by no visible hand,—and nothing (but terror) comes of it. Perhaps Mr. Matthew Browne will maintain that this is not nervousness,—is as little

nervousness as the *borborigmi* attributed to nerves at which he is so justly indignant. But we are afraid he must take the good and the bad of nerves together, and it is unquestionably true that while nerves in good order mean an improved system of telegraphic communication with the universe, nerves in bad order mean many things a good deal worse than no communication at all,—false communications, or ominous announcements of coming communications which do not come. When Mrs. Gamp remarked that “fiddlestrings is weakness to exorcize my nerves this night,” she, though not a person of delicate sensibilities and perceptions, had got hold of the true image to express the pains of nervous liabilities,—tense and agitated fibres vibrating with unintelligible undertones or screams which tell nothing of the hand that impressed them, and often little or nothing of any meaning they were intended to convey. No doubt Mr. Browne will say very properly that disease of a high function must be more dangerous and fatal than disease of a low one, and that if a diseased digestion issues only in *borborigmi* and other ignominious symptoms maliciously ascribed to nerves, diseased nerves must issue in something worse, but that it would be as absurd to argue from *borborigmi* that a digestion is a misfortune, or from undecipherable telegrams that the telegraph is a nuisance, as from evil presentiments, and empty terrors, that nerves are a mistake. Well, that is true, no doubt; but suppose we have nerves altogether healthy, still they will be in the way in two cases,—if the pain and pleasure their use gives is so far in advance of their informing or perceptive power as to occupy and chain the mind in the attitude of suffering or enjoyment; or, secondly, if they report more than the mind can grasp and use. A sweet smell, for instance, is more pleasant than instructive, a freezing temperature is more painful than instructive, and if the nerves be of a kind to tremble with such intense enjoyment in the one case and such intense pain in the other as to exclude much use of the perceptive nerves, then nervousness of this kind is undoubtedly—with limited creatures capable of only a certain defined amount of conscious being—a misfortune. Persons who are “all naked feeling and raw life” are like Isaac of York on the dog-irons in Front De Brûl’s dungeon. They receive plenty of reports of a very exciting, but by no means of an instructive kind. Nay, even perceptive as distinguished from sensitive nervousness may be in excess, if it is

too much for the considering and originating power. Suppose a telegraphic centre which receives nothing but true reports, but is so much occupied with receiving them that it has neither time nor power to send back answers to the communicating districts, and you have nearly the state of a nervous organization which receives such a multitude of even true impressions that it cannot react with any power or judgment upon the world. No doubt this is frequently the true condition of the poetic temperament, especially of poets,—who, like Shelley, have sometimes scarcely power even to sift and arrange the delicate impressions they receive, so confusing and overpowering is the throng. There is a description, we think by Mr. Trelawny, of his finding Shelley sitting in a wood, with some scraps of paper filled with half-coherent thoughts and verses, all teeming so fast from his brain that, as Shelley felt, they were a mere anarchy of beautiful impressions, treading as fast on each other’s heels, and causing as many collisions of meaning and feeling as, according to the latest theory of Saturn’s rings, there are among the planetary beads which by their rotation compose those rings.

Now what we think Mr. Matthew Browne has forgotten to point out in his amusing article is, that “nerves” in his sense—the apparatus for receiving delicate impressions and sensations—certainly do not promote but rather diminish *nerve*, the power by which we react upon the world and turn to full account the anarchic assemblage of our impressions. Shelley had no doubt nerve in some things. He was not afraid of dying, for instance, and could lie quite still in a boat in perfect tranquillity in the immediate prospect of drowning, and without being able to swim a stroke. But this was rather deficiency in love of life than the nerve which resists disturbing influences, concentrates all available and serviceable impressions for immediate use, and so organizes the mind for the purposes of life. It is clear that Shelley had exceedingly little of this sort of nerve,—as his wild visions, and almost disturbed reason after such visions, prove. Of all poets whose lives we know Goethe had perhaps the most nerve,—indeed his finest poems bear more trace of nerve, that is, *deliberate* marshalling of his own inward forces to meet external experiences, than of nerves in Mr. Mathew Browne’s sense,—the involuntary reporters of sense. It is curious enough that nerve in our sense can even neutralize and, so to say, absolutely suspend the impressions produced by the nerves as mere special report-

ers. As soldiers in battle lose an arm or a leg without receiving any information of the fact except from the mechanical difficulty of using what is no longer there to be used, so in a hundred operations of ordinary life the tension which a man puts upon his active or intellectual faculties will actually render him almost sensation-proof and perception-proof till the tension is voluntarily relaxed. Indeed many men exhibit nervousness in the ordinary sense only when women, who have no sympathy with this sort of tension, and are scarcely aware when it is going on, break in upon it with little irritations from practical life, — solicitations to attend to the bills and admire the children, or, it may be, mere indications, as irritating as anything else, that a suspense of attention at a critical point is no effort or annoyance to themselves, by whispered inquiries after a finer kind of darning silk in the very crisis of a discussion, or voluntary exits in the middle of a passage read aloud from a book to win their sympathy. "Nervous" men are frequently men rather of nerve than of nerves, who concentrate their mind strongly on one task at a time, and cannot learn to relax the reins till it is accomplished. But Mr. Matthew Browne is certainly mistaken in supposing that "nerves" are necessarily favourable to "nerve." Women have more nerves than men, so far as a much readier perception of the multiplicity of things happening before their eyes, and imagination of much which does not happen except in their own minds, is concerned, — but their nerves usually lead to want of nerve. On the other hand, men like Governor Eyre, with nerve enough for a martyrdom, — the martyrs, by the way, had probably much more concentrative nerve than delicacy of nerves, — cannot have very fine nerves, or he would have died under the suffering of his 700-mile desert walk, could not have endured to let loose the wild Maroons even on negroes, and would have been horror-struck instead of gratified with Colonel Hobbs's account of his pleasant ways of investigating guilt by holding a pistol to the head of an informer. In short Mr. Matthew Browne, while a little more than just to nerves, has been decidedly less than just to nerve. The power to react upon life certainly does not vary at all in proportion to the delicacy and variety of the reports received from life. Great literary men may have been usually men of nerves, but the greatest practical men have been men of nerve. The highest nervous constitution is to have a slight preponderance of nerve over

nerves, but to have as much of both as possible. Hence Mr. Matthew Browne has been somewhat unjust to the stupid world he criticizes, by underrating its nerve, which is often very much in excess of that of the nervous class he eulogizes. No doubt it is less credit to have good nerve if you have obtuse nerves, but it is a real misfortune to have power of nerves in great excess over your power of nerve.

ESPARTO GRASS.

THE important position which the lately discovered article of petroleum has rapidly taken in commerce is very interesting in itself, as suggesting how quickly the discovery of any new principle of action would exercise an important influence on the present state of our industry. Another discovery has lately been made, which, though of less importance than that of petroleum, is still so interesting in character, and so useful as regards an important article of manufacture, that we think our readers will be glad to receive the following information on the subject.

We allude to the discovery lately made of the applicability of the *Atocha*, or as it is called in Spain "*esparto*," to the manufacture of paper. Mr. Lloyd, of the Walthamstow Paper Mills, is stated to have had a great share in the merit of this discovery; and Mr. Mark, the British Consul at Malaga, has drawn up an interesting report on the subject, which has lately been made public in the commercial reports.

This grass is the produce of waste lands, — it requires no expense in cultivation and little in collecting. It is best propagated from the roots and not from seed. It is perennial and propagates of itself, and improves by a regular yearly gathering if plucked with sufficient care. Mr. Mark has devoted great care in his endeavours to ascertain the climate and soil which are favourable to the development of the plant; and it appears that the *Atocha* requires a decidedly hot and dry climate, — that it grows equally well in the plains and in the mountains to a moderate elevation, — and that as regards soil it flourishes both in calcareous and argillaceous soils, or when these soils are blended in the form of marl.

The greatest quantity is shipped from the provinces of Almeria and Murcia; but it is found, though in less abundance, in all the

Southern Provinces of Spain. It is also said to be plentiful in some parts of the opposite Coast of Africa, and shipments are made from Oran to England.

Prior to the discovery of its being available for the manufacture of paper the esparto had been used in Spain as fuel, in the manufacture of ropes for mining and rigging, and for making baskets and matting. But the discovery of the valuable properties of the grass has made a complete revolution in the districts where it grows. Fortunes have been realized by individuals who were the proprietors of the land which produces it. The price has more than doubled, and is now estimated by Mr. Mark at £4 2s. per English ton on board. The greater part of the exports have as yet been directed to England, where in the brief space of three or four years the article has become a requisite of the highest importance, 160,000 tons having been, as it is said, imported into England

in that period; and Mr. Mark estimates the present rate of annual export at 50,000 tons.

Mr. Mark anticipates that even at its present enhanced price the Spanish grass will take a place with cotton, hemp, and wool as one of the staple and essential bases of manufacturing industry, and if this anticipation should be realized, in addition to the valuable resource which it seems likely to prove to our paper manufacturers, it will form an important element in trade between this country and Spain, — indeed we already learn that our ship-owners have largely profited by a discovery which has enabled them to find freights for their vessels employed in conveying coals and machinery to the mining districts in Spain, and which had hitherto, in the majority of cases, been under the necessity of returning to England in ballast. — *Economist*, Dec. 30.

"THERE SHALL BE NO MORE SEA."

"THERE shall be no more sea:"
So spake the Prophet of the golden lips,
Whose vision, clear and free,
Saw the far depths of that Apocalypse.

From each cavernous deep,
Where storms come not, and tempest wave is dumb,

The forms of them that sleep
Shall rise undying when the Judge shall come!

And then, its history o'er,
The great wide sea shall flee and pass away,
And many a golden shore,
Long hidden, greet the bright, eternal day.

"No sea!" . . . And will the earth
Lose his loved bride, with all her countless smiles?

Shall that diviner birth
Destroy the beauty of her myriad isles?

Shall that rich voice of praise,
Wide Ocean's anthem echoing to her Lord —
That hymn of ancient days,
A thousand parts all met in sweet accord —

Shall that be heard no more?
Shall all the beauty, all the glory flee?
Shall the new earth's rich store
Lack the bright marvels of th' encircling sea?

No! Far as man may dream
The wondrous glory yet to be reveal'd,
Still on the eye shall gleam
The emerald waters as a crystal field;

Still on the golden isles
The brightness of the Lord of light shall shine,
And still the countless smiles
Illumine the face of that clear hyaline.

Only the drear expanse
Of waters barren, stormy, fathomless,

Shall meet no more our glance—
Shall leave the new-born earth our souls to
bless.

No more the treacherous wave
Shall whelm poor wanderers in the homeless
deep—
The dark and lonely grave
Where thousand shipwreck'd souls have slept
their sleep.

No more the billows wild
Shall hurl white breakers on the rock-bound
coast;
By mightiest spell beguiled,
Slumbers each form of all the monster host.

Levinthan is tamed
Who scorn'd the waters in their pride of
strength;
And now no more is named
Where once he measured all his monstrous
length.

But still the ear shall greet
The music of the ever-rippling wave,
And where the waters meet,
The crystal tide the palm-girt shore shall lave.

Crown'd high with amaranth grove,
The hills shall rise by man and angels trod;
The ocean of His love
Shall still make glad the city of our God.

When Eden's bowers were green
We knew not how the four great rivers wound
Those glorious fields between,
Or circling took their wide majestic round

To lands renown'd of old—
Cush, Asshur, Havilah, whence came the
spice,
The onyx, and the gold—
Yet water'd still the groves of Paradise.

We know not how the light
Shall flow when neither sun nor moon shall
shine,
And yet no shade of night
Shall mar the glory of the blaze divine.

We know not how the streams
Of those great rivers shall flow wide and free,
And yet the Prophet's dreams
Proclaim aloud, "There shall be no more sea."

We know not . . . but the veil
Which hides it from our sight shall one day
lift,
And, where in vision pale
As yet the darkness and the storm-clouds drift,

God shall make all things new,
And shoreless sea shall join with sealess shore;
And cleansed eyes shall view
Might, wisdom, mercy, met for evermore.
— *Good Words*. E. H. P.

CONSIDER.

CONSIDER

The lilies of the field whose bloom is brief:—
We are as they;
Like them we fade away,
As doth a leaf.

Consider

The sparrows of the air of small account:
Our God doth view
Whether they fall or mount,—
He guards us too.

Consider

The lilies that do neither spin nor toil,
Yet are most fair:—
What profits all this care
And all this coil?

Consider

The birds that have no barn nor harvest-
weeks;
God gives them food:—
Much more our Father seeks
To do us good.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

— *Macmillan's Magazine*.

TWO PICTURES.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

In sky and wave the white clouds swam,
And the blue hills of Nottingham
Through gaps of leafy green
Across the lake were seen,

When, in the shadow of the ash
That dreams its dream in Attitash,
In the warm summer weather,
Two maidens sat together.

They sat and watched in idle mood
The gleam and shade of lake and wood,—
The beech the keen light smote,
The white sail of a boat,—

Swan flocks of lilies shoreward lying,
In sweetness, not in music, dying,—
Harduack and virgin's-bower,
And white-spiked clethra-flower.

With careless ears they heard the plash
And breezy wash of Attitash,
The wood-bird's plaintive cry,
The locust's sharp reply.

And teased the while with playful hand,
The shaggy dog of Newfoundland,
Who-e uncouth frolic spilled
Their baskets berry-filled.

Then one, the beauty of whose eyes
Was evermore a great surprise,
Tossed back her queenly head,
And, lightly laughing, said, —

“No bridegroom’s hand be mine to hold
That is not lined with yellow gold;
I tread no cottage-floor;
I own no lover poor.

My love must come on silken wings,
With bridal lights of diamond rings, —
Not foul with kitchen smirch,
With tallow-dip for torch.”

The other, on whose modest head
Was lesser dower of beauty shed,
With look for home hearths meet,
And voice exceeding sweet,

Answered, — “We will not rivals be;
Take thou the gold, leave love to me;
Mine be the cottage small,
And thine the rich man’s hall.

I know, indeed, that wealth is good;
But lowly roof and simple food,
With love that hath no doubt,
Are more than gold without.”

Behind the wild grape’s tangled screen,
Beholding them, himself unseen,
A young man straying near,
The maidens chanced to hear.

He saw the pride of beauty born,
He heard the red lips’ words of scorn;
And, like a silver bell,
That sweet voice answering well.

“Why trust,” he said, “my foolish eyes?
My ear has pierced the fair disguise;
Who seeks my gold, not me,
My bride shall never be.”

The supreme hours unnoted come;
Unfelt the turning tides of doom;

And so the maids laughed on,
Nor dreamed what Fate had done:

Nor knew the step was Destiny’s;
That rustled in the birchen trees,
As, with his life forecast
Anew, the listener past.

Ere long by lake and rivulet side
The summer roses paled and died,
And Autumn’s fingers shed
The maple’s leaves of red.

Through the long gold-hazed afternoon,
Alone, but for the diving loon,
The partridge in the brake,
The black duck on the lake,

Beneath the shadow of the ash
Sat man and maid by Attitash;
And earth and air made room
For human hearts to bloom.

Soft spread the carpets of the sod,
And scarlet-oak and golden-rod
With blushes and with smiles
Lit up the forest aisles.

The mellow light the lake aslant,
The pebbled margin’s ripple-chant
Attenuated and low-toned,
The tender mystery owned.

And through the dream the lovers dreamed
Sweet sounds stole in and soft lights streamed;
The sunshine seemed to bless,
The air was a caress.

Not she who lightly scoffed was there,
With jewels in her midnight hair,
Her dark, disdainful eyes,
And proud lips worldly-wise;

But she who could for love dispense
With all its golden accidents,
And trust her heart alone,
Found love and gold her own.

Atlantic Monthly.